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WORLD SOCCER

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Pele
EXCLUSIVE: My fight to change football!

Lineker's Amazing Farewell

SPOTLIGHT
SCHMEICHEL, GOUGH, HASSLER

Premier League lift-off . . . with Howard Wilkinson

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Pele: My fight for football

World Cup hero demands more changes in the Laws

PELE is still the greatest name in the game. In this **EXCLUSIVE** interview with **KEIR RADNEDGE** he reveals more than ever before about his past — and how he wants to see soccer changing.

Golden glory . . . Pele with the present FIFA World Cup (left) and the original Jules Rimet trophy (right).

KR: Your name is Edson Arantes do Nascimento. We know Brazilian players often have nicknames. Where did "Pele" come from?

P: I was seven when I "met" Pele. I was born in a place called Tres Coracoes. Then when I was seven we came to Bauru. It was a small town but it was bigger than Tres Coracoes and the people thought they were a little more fancy. They started to tease us and the kids called me "Pele." I didn't know if I'd done something wrong but I didn't like the name so I started to fight the other boys. I told them: My name is Edson. Then, at school, all the girls started calling me Pele as well. So I started fighting them too and I was suspended from school for two days. My father had to go down to the school. They asked me: Why were you fighting? I said: Because they call me Pele and I don't know what this name means. I don't like it. But it was too late. It stuck!

KR: Santos was your only professional club in Brazil. How did you join them ?

P: At 14 Santos went to play in Bauru and my father talked with their president. They bought four players from Bauru's youth team and I was one of them. So at

15 I signed for Santos. At 16 I was in the national team. At 17 . . . I was in Sweden. I see the film of the Final again, with me crying at the end and it seems like only yesterday.

KR: What do you remember from the World Cup in 1958?

P: I remember meeting the Queen of Sweden. That was wonderful, to shake hands with a Queen. There was something else. People in Sweden were not used to seeing black people. Every time we went out of the training camp there were crowds. And I was only 17, I had never seen so many beautiful women. I could not believe my eyes. I did not know where to look! I thought: "How can I prepare for the World Cup in a place like this?" Near the training camp there is a lake. The girls used to sunbathe topless there. So when we went out training that's the way we used to run!

KR: Has the game changed so much since then ? Do you still recognise the football you played ?

P: The game, out on the pitch, is almost the same. If you have good players, you get good football. Italy, for example, still use tactics which are based on a sweeper and man-for-man marking. But the big change is off the pitch. Players have so much pressure with the commercialisation of the game. Take shirt adverts. The team have the name of a company across their shirts so to lose is very bad because no company wants to be associated with a losing team Television is the biggest factor, of course, in all that. In the United States, for example, if you don't have TV . . . you don't have a sport. Look at FIFA yesterday and today. FIFA today is the most business-controlled sports authority in the world. For overall sport these changes have been good. The big companies and their money bring life into the game. But that makes life more complicated for the players. Some are into promotion more than football. They do not play with the heart — one club this year, another next year. In my day you played for, say, Sao Paulo. That was it. Now you play for Sao Paulo this year, Corinthians next year, then Palmeiras, Santos. In my day that was not so easy. You had one club in your heart. Now it's the money. In Brazil we had the development where players are paid to celebrate their goals in front of certain advertising boards around the pitch. When they score you see them looking all around: Where's the board? And then they see the board and they start running with all the other players chasing them!

KR: What about the Brazilian national team?

P: The problems are the same. At the last World Cup a lot of the Brazilian players wanted to be on the national team so they could earn transfers to European clubs. Of course, a lot of the players were already in Europe and were actually negotiating during the finals in Italy with their managers and impresarios. On the subject of money for example, I have a problem with my son who is a reserve goalkeeper with my old club, Santos. The No. 1 is Sergio, who plays for the national team. When Brazil called up Sergio my son was very upset. Santos had another reserve goalkeeper, named Nilton. He had been a reserve with Santos for eight years and they put Nilton in the team and not my son. My son was angry. I said to him: "Look, Edson (he has my name, Edson, but as a player he is called Edinho), you have only had a contract for one year. You are the No. 1 reserve, now Nilton is in the team, there is no reason for you to be upset." He said: "But if I can play in the first team, then I can get their bonuses." Already, he is thinking not of the game, but of the money. This is a problem for so many footballers today. The business comes before the enjoyment of the football.

KR: Is your son a goalkeeper because you were a forward — to avoid comparisons?

P: Originally he was a midfield player. I used to joke with him: "Look, I have contacts in Italy and Spain. We can get you a good contract in Europe." And I said to him: "Don't go in goal, it's too

CONTINUED OVER

Goalkeeper in training . . . "I was always the reserve keeper in the days when there were no substitutes."

PELE FACT BOX

Born: Edson Arantes do Nascimento on October 23, 1940. at Tres Coracoes.

Career:

Team	Years	Games	Goals
Santos	1956-74	1,114	1,088
NY Cosmos	1975-77	108	65
Brazil	1957-71	97	111
Others	1956-77	45	18
Total		**1,364**	**1,282**

Santos debut: September 7, 1956 in 7-1 win v Corinthians (one goal).
NY Cosmos debut: June 15, 1975 in a 2-2 draw against Dallas Tornado (one goal).
Brazil debut: July 7, 1957 as sub in 2-1 defeat by Argentina in Rio de Janeiro (one goal).

Titles:
World Cup: 1958, 1970.
World Club Cup: 1962, 1963.
South American Club Cup: 1962, 1963.
Sao Paulo Championship: 1956, 1958, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1964, 1965, 1967, 1968, 1969.

Getting a free ride . . . Pele celebrates his 50th birthday with son Edson.

Pele . . . the biggest name of all.

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dangerous." But he made up his mind so now he's a goalkeeper. Yes, maybe it's because I was a forward!

KR: A lot of great goalscorers like "playing" goalkeeper don't they?

P: Yes, I used to like playing in goal. At Santos and Brazil I was always the reserve goalkeeper in the team because, of course, in those days substitutes were not allowed so one player always had to be ready to go in goal in emergencies. Three times as a pro with Santos I played in goal. When Johan Cruyff trained with us at the Cosmos he used to like to keep goal. In training I used to have a bet with him. We used to shoot five penalties each. I used to win. He wasn't a very good goalkeeper on AstroTurf. Maybe he was better on real grass.

KR: Apart from making a comeback in the United States, did you have any other offers earlier in your career?

P: I had a lot of proposals to go to Italy, to Spain, to Mexico. But I was OK. I was making nice money with Santos, in Brazil. I was not interested in transferring abroad for a little more money. But my son has a different mentality. Society has been commercialised. This is life today. In football we have a short career. A player has 15 years to make his life. We are not like doctors or singers who can go on until they are 70. We are different. But even footballers cannot always think in material terms. They should remember the game.

KR: Did you have many operations to cure injuries ?

P: I never had an operation in my career. I had only three bad injuries. I had knee ligaments at the World Cup in England, playing at Goodison Park against Portugal. Then another one and once I broke my nose. But I didn't even have an operation to have it fixed. Many times I refused an injection, because the effect of the anaesthetic is dangerous. You don't feel the injury so you play but you don't know what new damage you are doing. There was pressure with Santos and Brazil because it was always in the contract that I had to play. But I never played when I was not fit enough to run. Nowadays there are more competitions as well as the pressure of all the money and the commercial contracts. But players should refuse injections to enable them to play. I did have injections as part of my treatment for injuries, to help reduce swelling and so on. But to play? Never.

KR: Whose football do you appreciate today ?

P: Holland. France. Cameroon. This is talking about style, of course, rather than results. Brazil used to play only attacking football. When they changed that style I saw only trouble ahead. For ten years we were going backwards. But I believe it is possible to play with style AND win — as long, of course, as you have the players! Look at Italy. You have a mixture. In the Italian Championship I think you see the best football in Europe. Yet the national team still has the "libero mentality." Milan, for example, have a different style and they won the League. They adapted because of their foreign players.

KR: At the European finals Holland made a basic mistake. They could not maintain the same standard of play against Denmark as against Germany. What's the secret?

P: Of course, it's attitude. You have to stay at the same mental level. You cannot take a rest. But how you do that depends on the person. The player must go into every game believing this is The Final. For each game, you have to prepare 100 per cent. At the end of each game I would say: Thank you God, that we won today. But I always knew that the next day I would have another defender right at my back. I had to be at the same mental level for every game.

KR: Do you think the Laws should be changed?

P: I think it's necessary for soccer to progress. Every sport changes for the sake of developing. It's for the best. FIFA asked me a year or so ago what I thought. So I gave them two or three ideas. Everyone, for example, complains about the defensive wall at free kicks just outside the penalty area. I think you should take the wall away. Ban it. If you have two players between you and the goalkeeper and you beat one, and the other fouls you, what happens? You get a free kick and now you find instead of one player between you and the goal you have a whole team! Then there's the throw-in. Every time you have a throw-in you have one player fewer on the pitch. You're at a disadvantage. Even if you have a player with a long throw. But, if you allowed a player to drop the ball and kick it you would be speeding up the game — which is what we all want. People want goals, above all. One more I would like to see is that they abolish the indirect free kick in the penalty box. If it's a foul, it's a penalty. Sometimes I used to be fouled and the referee gave an indirect free kick — a two-touch free kick, we call it — inside the penalty box. By the time you take the kick both teams are squashed in the penalty box and there's no room for anything — certainly no room to score a goal! Then people talk about abolishing offside. I don't think this is a good idea. But I think the emphasis is wrong. Now when a player goes through and it's close, the linesman waves his flag, the referee blows his whistle and the goal is disallowed. Because the defence is always given the benefit of the doubt. Why? That's the wrong way round. It's the forward who should be given the benefit of the doubt. So that's my other idea. Give the benefit to the attacking team, NOT the defending team.

KR: What about making goals bigger?

P: I'm against it. Defenders nowadays are getting the better of forwards. But goalkeepers work hard to know their area. It's not fair to change that. Anyway, forwards should know how to put the ball in the net.

KR: Do Brazil have such forwards?

P: In the last 20 years we haven't had forwards like Garrincha, Pele, Tostao, Jairzinho. We have good players. The trouble is the coaches are too tight. They keep too much control over the players. We had our orders in my day, too. In the 1970 World Cup we played with only one man up to start with. But the coach never had to tell us that when we had the ball we all went forward. We knew that. We did that automatically. Not like Italy. Even today when they get the ball some of their players don't move forward because they are so disciplined. When we played Italy in the Final in 1970 we practised turning Carlos Alberto into a winger. We knew that Facchetti would stay with Jairzinho. So Jairzinho moved away from his wing . . . and Carlos Alberto used the space to score a wonderful goal. Defenders should never be afraid to go forward. Not even the goalkeeper, with the ball at his feet. Like Higuita! If the goalkeeper sees a chance to go for goal, yes, even he should go for it!

KR: Did you ever play at Wembley?

P: No, never — and nobody believes it. I mentioned it to Bobby Charlton the other day and he could not believe it either. But it's true. I played in several places in England for Santos — at Sheffield Wednesday, at Aston Villa and other clubs — and, of course, for Brazil at Goodison in the 1966 World Cup. But I never played at Wembley. The one time Brazil did play there during my career (in 1963) I must have been either injured or away somewhere with Santos. It's something I regret. To the Brazilian footballer, Wembley is special. Two years ago, when they were arranging a special match between Brazil and the Rest of the World to celebrate my 50th birthday, we wanted to play it at Wembley. But there was a problem over some other matches or events there at the same time. So the game was played in Milan instead. Nobody told me there was a problem until after the change had been made. Maybe we could have done something. I wish it had been possible . . .

'Why I refused to play in 1974'

PELE revealed, at long last, why he did not play in the 1974 World Cup — in protest at the political situation in Brazil. He said: "I was playing for Santos, we won the Sao Paulo championship and I was leading scorer only a few months before the World Cup, but Brazil had a military government and they were forcing people to do what they did not want to do. I did not accept that.

"I knew that if we did well in the World Cup, attention would be focused on the team and people would forget the things that were happening in Brazil. I stayed out as a protest."

Incredibly, Pele might have played in the 1986 World Cup, which would have been a record fifth finals appearance for an outfield player.

He said: "The president of the Brazilian Confederation asked me if I would be able to play in Mexico.

"I told him that if he warned me in time and the coach agreed, I would play. But then the news got out, there was a hell of a commotion and I was never called up."

WHATS ON

Playing the Premier name game

A NEW, lucrative, TV-adorned, high-profile competition starts in August . . . the Premier League. New in name but, in reality, little more than a dressed-up version of the English First Division.

Only the management structure is different, with the Premier League reporting direct to the Football Association run out of Lancaster Gate, London, rather than Lytham St Anne's, Lancashire.

Domestic competition is not the only area of the English game subject to a new start.

England must pick up the pieces from a depressing European Championship campaign. Manager Graham Taylor's first opportunity is a Wembley friendly on September 9, probably against another of Europe's redevelopers, Spain, under new manager Javier Clemente.

● **Howard's Way — pages 62, 63.**

SATURDAY, AUGUST 1
Start of Scottish League season.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 2
World Cup qualifier, CONCACAF (Caribbean region) First Round: Surinam v St Vincent.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 8
FA Charity Shield: Leeds Utd v Liverpool (Wembley).

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12
World Cup qualifier, Europe Group 3: Latvia v Lithuania.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 15
Start of English League season.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 16
World Cup qualifiers, Europe Group 1: Estonia v Switzerland. **CONCACAF (Central region) First Round:** Panama v Costa Rica. **(Caribbean region) First Round:** Jamaica v Trinidad & Tobago.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19
Champions' Cup & Cup-winners' Cup preliminary round, 1st leg (8 matches).

SUNDAY, AUGUST 23
World Cup qualifier, CONCACAF (Central region) First Round: Costa Rica v Panama.

WEDNESDAY, 26 AUGUST
World Cup qualifier, Europe Group 3: Latvia v Denmark.
Internationals: France v Brazil, Norway v Sweden.

SUNDAY, 30 AUGUST
World Cup qualifier, CONCACAF (Caribbean region) First Round: St Vincent v Surinam.

European Championship glory has not entirely passed English and Scottish football. The new domestic seasons will be all the more fascinating for the successes in Sweden of PETER SCHMEICHEL and RICHARD GOUGH

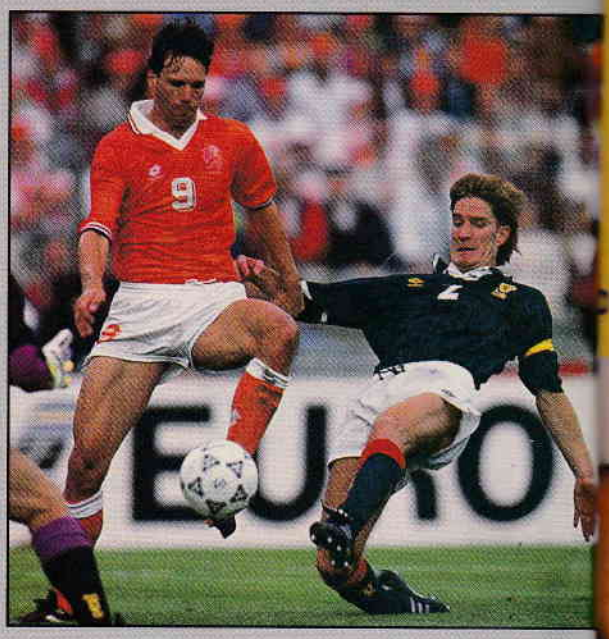
Gough finds room at the top

SCOTLAND'S emergence from the European Championship with a measure of credit surprised most people. Richard Gough's emergence, however, should have surprised nobody.

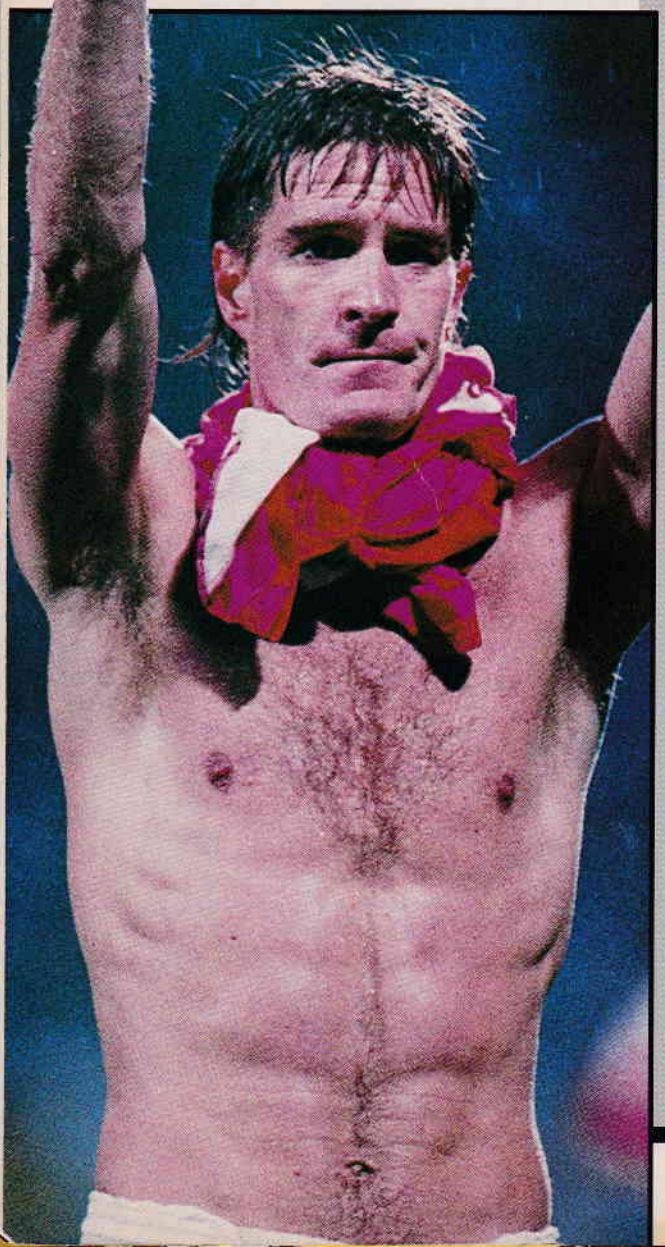
For the single-minded Rangers central defender will rarely settle for being second best in anything he does.

If football teams are cast in the mould of their captain, then Scotland may have cause for optimism. Few continental observers knew much about Gough, or the Scottish players generally, before the finals, but they certainly did by its finish.

Gough's faultless performances against the likes of Marco Van Basten, Sergei Yuran and Karlheinz Riedle caught the eye as an individual, and his contribution as team leader made an even bigger impact.



Tackling . . . Gough challenges Van Basten during the Euro Championship.



Gough led the side in such a positive manner that his name became imprinted on the minds of most observers. Certainly, Van Basten and Riedle won't forget him.

Gough gave them such a hard time that Van Basten admitted he was "one of the best defenders I've faced."

Gough, 30, was named in the Team of the Tournament by Italian football magazine *Guerin Sportivo*. If he was younger, Italian clubs almost certainly would be rushing to Ibrox waving huge cheques.

Not that Rangers would be likely to sell. Gough was bought for £1.5m from Spurs in 1987 for those very defensive and leadership qualities that he displayed in Sweden.

National coach Andy Roxburgh, who has not always seen eye to eye with his national captain, praised Gough for his contribution, saying: "He looked as if he had been playing in that role for years. Richard had a great tournament and proved what a good leader he is."

Gough now wants to captain his country into the next century, because he believes he can play until the age of 38.

He says: "Graeme Souness, Gordon Strachan and Ray Wilkins have all told me I should be able to. Ray once told me that your body is your bank. I have always been conscious of looking after myself and hopefully that will pay off.

"The European Championship finals were a huge personal challenge. I was in against some of the best strikers in the world.

Roxburgh row is forgotten as Scotland skipper shines

"And the added responsibility of being captain put me under more pressure. Don't get me wrong, I was delighted with the honour. But I felt it was vital that I turned in particularly good performances, and the games turned out to be my three best for Scotland."

Gaining

Ironically Gough's crucial leadership role was in doubt until just before the tournament, the result of a public row between player and manager at Glasgow Airport after the squad had flown home from Switzerland.

They had rescued a 2-2 draw that proved crucial to gaining qualification for the finals, but Roxburgh was angry at Gough's last-minute withdrawal, citing injury. Gough did not wilt under accusations of self-interest, and not hold back from retaliating at Roxburgh.

Eventually the split healed, which was just as well for Scotland. They needed someone to stand up for their rights on the field in Sweden.

They were written off as no-hopers, by their own countrymen and those abroad, before they even got on the plane for Gothenburg. Franz Beckenbauer even wrote in *WORLD SOCCER* that they had no players who, if injured, could be regarded as a great loss.

Against that dismissive background the Scots began against Holland in Gothenburg and turned in a creditable performance that threatened to thwart the Dutch until Dennis Bergkamp pounced on a half-chance in the 81st minute.

Gough had stuck to Van Basten, while Paul McStay shone in midfield. The only problem was the lack of scoring chances created.

The Scots tried to remedy that situation against Germany, when they took the defence apart in an opening 20-minute bombardment.

Bodo Illgner's superb one-handed save from Gough's header after two minutes set the tone. McPherson then missed a glorious chance, while Illgner had to be sharp to deny McClair and McAllister.

Although Riedle put the Germans ahead in 27 minutes and then Effenberg extended that two minutes after the interval with a freak goal, the World Champions were never allowed to relax.

Gough led by example as he drove the Scots forward for the rest of the game. Battered Germany had to take off Stefan Reuter and

Guido Buchwald, who found out, via McCall and Gough, that the Scots would compete for every ball.

The result was to be another in the Scotland Book of Glorious Failures but the reality was more than that.

They demonstrated they had great heart, and played with such invention and skill that they also won rare foreign praise.

McStay showed against Germany that he was truly the playmaking talent his fans have claimed he was.

He sparked the win against the CIS with a 25-yard shot. Victory was a fitting way to end the tournament, and Scotland avoided their old habit of producing an anti-climax after the heroics against Germany.

To beat a team who qualified at Italy's expense was heartening in view of the fact that the countries meet in the World Cup group — and the point was not lost on Italian boss Arrigo Sacchi, who claimed that the Scots now represent a danger to his side's chances.

Showings

Gough reflected: "I don't think the CIS expected us to come out and fight, given that our tournament was over. My Rangers team-mate Alexei Mikhailichenko came up to me at the end and his face said it all — he was surprised.

"Byshovets had quite a few harsh words to say about us and that was a real spur."

Proving the critics wrong was one of the real reasons behind Scotland's above-average showings.

The Scots, so often regarded by world football observers as the joke side of major tournaments, could afford to laugh at the expense of much-hyped France and England, who contributed nothing.

One victory does not herald a new dawn, but all three performances should give Roxburgh hope that his men are capable of shaking off their old image.

The fans were even bigger heroes than their players. They won a special UEFA Fair Play award for their sporting behaviour and good humour throughout the tournament. The Tartan Army had no arrests — yet again — in sharp contrast to the English fans, and were a big hit with the Swedish public, especially in Norrkoping.

They proved that drink does not have to be accompanies by violence. One grateful Gothenburg bar which took £17,000 in ONE NIGHT thanks to the Scots ran a free bus to transport them to the German match in Norkopping.

And the sight of the Scots joining in the CIS anthem was a memory that will live for ever.

PHIL GORDON

Probably the Best Goalkeeper in the World

Even Povlsen must admit that Schmeichel is tops

PETER SCHMEICHEL emerged as one of the great heroes of Denmark's world-shaking triumph in the European Championship. His team-mates were as surprised as their beaten opponents from France, Germany and Sweden.

Denmark, remember, were called into action, only 11 days before the finals began, because of Yugoslavia's exclusion on political grounds. The Danes had been winding down, preparing for their holidays, not for the next most important event after the World Cup.

In that first match, a goalless draw against England in Malmo, the Danes looked like holiday-makers. Their passing was poor, their shooting wasteful. Fortunately, England were quite as ineffective. They could not take advantage even when Schmeichel twice dropped "simple" crosses.

After the match, Danish spearhead Flemming Povlsen said: "Some people have been saying we have the best goalkeeper in the world. I wonder why we didn't bring him with us."

If 28-year-old Schmeichel was stung by that remark or by media criticism, he did not admit it openly. But perhaps a reaction was evident in the sharper reflexes and more secure handling to be seen in the decisive 2-1 win over France.

Against Holland, in that dramatic Gothenburg semi-final, Schmeichel was heroic. One save from Brian Roy, at point-blank range, was among the highlights of the match. And Schmeichel's save from Marco Van Basten in the penalty shoot-out earned him a special award from sponsors Mastercard . . . and Denmark a place in the Final.

Attacking

Schmeichel makes no secret of the reason he copes so well with the aerial attacking work of the Dutch. He says: "It's all due to my season in England. The English League is all about crosses — and with 42 League games a season plus 20 more games in the various cups, that means an awful lot of them!"

The big man with the short, spiky blond hair joined Old Trafford's "Red Devils" for £800,000 via spells with Hvidovre and Brondby. United were far from being the first club to spy out this pianist's son. Newcastle had set the English ball rolling four years earlier. But they did not follow up an initial interest and Schmeichel filled in his part-time years first running a charity shop for the World Wildlife Fund, then in the advertisement department of a local newspaper in Copenhagen.

All the while his heart was set on football. He earned a fledgling reputation in the qualifying competition for the 1988 Olympics, then displaced veteran Troels Rasmussen in the middle of the European Championship finals earlier that year, in West Germany.

More English clubs came calling. Schmeichel says: "Not only Newcastle, but QPR and West Ham all came for me but I told Brondby that I would talk only to a club which was championship material and qualified for Europe. At 27 all I was interested in was winning a big trophy. There's no point playing football for a living if you have not won anything at the end of it. Okay, you might have plenty of money to live on but you will have no memories."

Schmeichel's arrival last summer made an immediate impact on United's defence — and fans. The hard-to-please choir from the Stretford End soon realised that, at long last, United had found a goalkeeper who might make that vital difference between dreaming of championship glory and achieving it.

Celebrating . . . Schmeichel and Christofte after the penalty shoot-out victory against Holland in the semi-final.

Occasional hitches are inevitable in a goalkeeper's life. Schmeichel provided one with his comments, in a book, about Denmark national manager Richard Moller Nielsen, who had to struggle hard to withstand unfavourable comparisons with his highly-popular and long-serving predecessor, Sepp Piontek.

He was not helped when Schmeichel wrote: "Under Piontek Danish football had become upper class, with Moller Nielsen it became working class." Schmeichel had to make a public apology to save his place in the team but very soon he was admitting that Moller Nielsen's coaching techniques were helping turn him into a better goalkeeper. His success with United helped defuse an established prejudice within English football, that foreign goalkeepers were all show.

He is powerful and commands his penalty box with iron resolution. Several of his Danish team-mates needed the physio's attention after mistakenly competing with Schmeichel in the air as they repelled yet another assault.

When it was all over, United manager Alex Ferguson had no hesitation hailing Schmeichel as "the best goalkeeper in the world."

The proof of that particular pudding may be tested more closely in two years' time, in the World Cup finals in the United States.

In the meantime, nobody can dispute that Schmeichel is the form keeper in Europe.

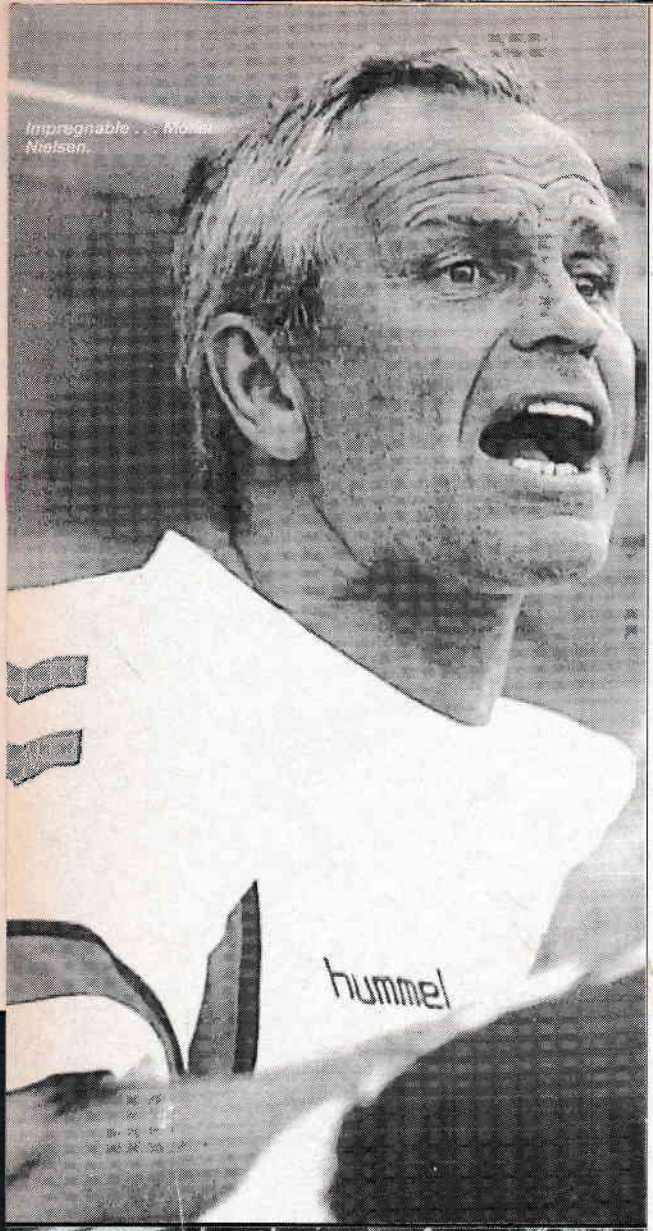
Just ask Marco Van Basten...

KEIR RADNEDGE

What next for Denmar

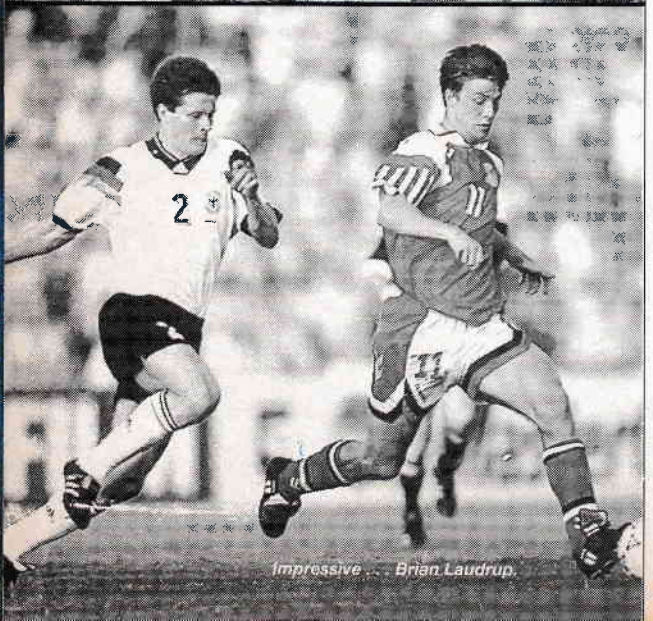
Surprise victory has a moral for all football

BY JIM HOLDEN



Impregnable . . . Richard Nielsen.

Inspiring . . . Denmark's Roligan fans.


Impressive . . . Brian Laudrup.

DENMARK celebrated their European Championship triumph with an open-top bus ride down Hans Christian Andersen Boulevard in central Copenhagen.

That was appropriate, for football's ugly ducklings, dismissed by every expert, had given the tournament grace and greatness as they matured into soccer swans.

Success brought scenes of jubilation not seen in the country since liberation from the Nazis in 1945.

Nobody could really believe such midsummer madness. Reality, of course, will intrude this Autumn with the start of qualification for the 1994 World Cup in America. As European champions the story now will be one of great expectations.

First, though, with one of soccer's rich ironies, Denmark must play Germany again in a replay of the European final on September 9.

The match had been arranged earlier to mark the opening of the stylishly refurbished all-seater Idraetsparken stadium in Copenhagen. The irony is not only that Germany must be faced again, but also that the new stadium was planned on the back of the brilliant but ultimately flawed Dynamite side of the 1980s.

As Denmark faded from centre stage in the last four years, attracting poor gates for home internationals, the new Idraetsparken was in danger of becoming a white elephant. The ugly duckling generation came to the rescue — and now have a stage to prove their worth.

As a small nation, the Danes will not expect to win every time. But they will demand a team to be proud of. And that already has sparked a huge debate about whether Michael Laudrup and Jan Molby can be persuaded back into coach Richard Moller Nielsen's plans.

The once beleagured coach, heavily criticised for losing the faith of such star players, is now in an impregnable position. He is even being credited with the brains behind the 3-5-2 tactics of the Dynamite era when he was assistant to Sepp Piontek.

The use of wing-backs, and the so-called "contra" counter-attacking policy, worked well in Sweden. But Moller Nielsen knows more attacking football will be demanded of champions.

Thus the debate over bringing back skilful players such as the elder Laudrup and Molby to augment his team. Laudrup, now playing with Barcelona, has been gracious about the Championship-winning side even though they played in the style he criticised.

He managed to watch the final on TV while on holiday in America (where younger brother Brian had booked up to be too!) and shared the nation's delight when he returned home. Michael has deliberately dodged questions about his future in international football, prompting speculation that he might seek a rapprochement with Moller Nielsen as Brian did before the finals to such devastating advantage.

Molby's case is slightly different in that he has always maintained a desire to play for his country. Moller Nielsen would not change his style to suit the Liverpool ace at short notice, but he could be fitted in as libero now.

Helped

Perhaps the most amazing aspect of Denmark's success was not the absence of such star names, but the inclusion of so many players competing in what even they will concede is a minor European league. Seven of the 12 players used in the final were from Danish clubs such as Brondby, Lyngby and B1903.

There is little doubt that helped the spirit of the side. Inevitably, though, success brought wealthier foreign clubs scouting again.

Kim Christofte joined Koln, Peter Nielsen and Johnny Molby went to Borussia Moenchengladbach, John Jensen signed for Arsenal while Torben Frank joined Lyon. Torben Piechnik and Henrik Larsen are both set to move to Italy. Kim Vilfort may stay at home, to be with his stricken daughter Line, but is also wanted by Koln.

Success brought a move to Fiorentina in Italy for Brian Laudrup from Bayern Munich for a £4m fee, the highest paid for a Danish player. How destabilising all those moves will be on the Danish team in general is a problem for Moller Nielsen.

On the positive side is the knowledge that his squad will be augmented by the youngsters who qualified for the Olympic soccer tournament in Barcelona by reaching the semi-finals of the European Under-21 tournament.

Moller Nielsen refused to consider any of those for the European Championship, although three or four should have been there on merit.

Striker Miklos Molnar, for instance, was top scorer in the Swiss League last season, while a number of players such as dynamic teenage twins Michael and Martin Johansen were in B1903's run to the UEFA Cup quarter-finals.

The lack of success in the last few years had led to a fall in the numbers of children playing the game.

Brondby sports chief Frits Ahlstrom explained: "The side which won in Sweden was a product of our youth system where boys are encouraged to play for fun and not compete until later years. The skills and freedom of people such as Brian Laudrup and Flemming Povlsen were developed that way.

"And they were then inspired by the thrilling soccer of the 1980s side. But there was a big danger that the system of playing for fun would be lost because it didn't bring success. Parents were getting angry at kids because they didn't win.

"It was becoming a very worrying scenario. But now it has been proved to be worthwhile and we desperately hope that our old youth policy will be maintained.

"Because it is not an accident that Denmark has produced so many good players for the size of the country in the last 15 years."

The latest product of that system is 16-year-old Martin Jorgensen, an attacking midfielder, who is on AGF's books as an amateur.

He is refusing to sign on as even a part-time pro — to leave himself free to join any big European club interested.

This is the way Povlsen started, leaving as a teenager to join Castilla.

Another vital benefit of success is financial. It immediately brought an invitation to play in a tournament in the US next summer alongside the home country, England and Germany.

It also should mean huge home gates for the next couple of years at least with the delightful return of the "Roligan" fans.

One critic respectfully dubbed them the "nicest drunks in the world." Denmark's triumph may have seemed like a fairytale.

But Hans Christian Andersen never wrote a story without a moral to be heeded.

's ducklings?

SOCCER LAW says teams and players are only as good as their last game. So what does the new season hold in store for European champions DENMARK and the outstanding individual of Euro '92, THOMAS HASSLER?

The Meteor Man

Little Hassler achieves giant's status

BY KEIR RADNEDGE

THE WISPS of fluff around Thomas Hassler's chin only serve to exacerbate the impression that here is a schoolboy trying to prove himself in a man's game. But, at the highest level, nobody can accuse Hassler of lacking in stature.

He was the outstanding individual of the 1992 European Championship. How appropriate that he should have begun his career with a West Berlin club named Meteor.

Hassler's match-turning displays from deep on the right wing for Germany provided a sharp riposte to the comments of England manager Graham Taylor about the value of a powerful physique.

Hassler is a world champion and just short of becoming a European champion not because of physical bulk but thanks to his mental and technical agility. He took upon himself, in Sweden, the leadership role of injured skipper Lothar Matthaus, even if it was Andy Brehme who wore the captain's armband.

Hassler, now 26, does not blast holes in opposing defences in the Matthaus manner. Rather, he slices them apart with passes as sharp as a kitchen knife.

Hassler's passing is probably the most ambitious in the modern European game. He bends his passes with left or right foot to create gaps for his strikers which nobody else imagined.

His creative work, let alone vital goals from free-kicks may also help convince Hassler that he is, at last, on the brink of great things in Italy.

Juventus signed him two years ago, after beating Hassler's German club, Koln, on their way to the UEFA Cup Final. But the timing of Hassler's £5.5million transfer to Turin proved unfortunate. Juventus' weakness was not so much in midfield or attack as defence.

A poor team failed to qualify for Europe for the first time in nearly 30 years and defensive reinforcements were sought.

Jurgen Kohler and Stefan Reuter were brought in from Bayern Munich and their arrival made their fellow German surplus to import regulations.

Considered

Roma bought him for £5million and considered their money wasted last autumn when Hassler failed to rekindle for his new club the partnership with centre-forward Rudi Voller which worked so well at national team level.

Then, at Christmas, it was as if Santa Claus had given Hassler his confidence back.

He deserves much of the credit for Roma's spring rise from the relegation fringe to a UEFA Cup spot.

Hassler says: "I realised halfway through the season that time was running out for me. If I was going to achieve anything in Italy I had to take the initiative on the pitch."

That attitude served Germany well in their first match at the European finals, against the CIS in Norrkoping. One minute remained when the Germans, trailing 1-0, were awarded a free-kick in the inside-left position just outside the CIS penalty box.

Hassler, skipper Brehme and sweeper Manni Binz stood over the ball. Hassler asked Brehme: "Which corner of the goal do you want me to hit it — left or right?" Brehme said: "I don't mind, as long as it's one or the other!"

In a well-rehearsed German routine, Jurgen Klinsmann stood on the end of the wall, Hassler aimed at his head, Klinsmann ducked at the last moment and goalkeeper Dimitri Kharin was too late.

That was into the top left-hand corner of the net. By contrast, Hassler put the free-kick which opened the scoring against Sweden into the bottom right-hand cornerof the goal.

He is gaining a reputation as a modern Platini around the fringe of the penalty box. But Hassler accepts his particular talent as more of a gift from nature.

He says: "I really don't know how I bend the ball the way I do. I just try to get my foot under the ball and concentrate on where I want it to go."

Hassler's team-mates hardly mind. As Brehme says: "As long as he scores goals with his free-kicks it doesn't matter whether he knows how he does it or not. In fact, that's good. If he doesn't know, the opposition certainly won't."

MANAGERS

Rinus Michels of Holland and Michel Platini of France always intended stepping down after Euro '92. That did not make their Swedish upsets any easier for the fans to bear. KEIR RADNEDGE reports.

MICHEL PLATINI has an engaging way of deflecting criticism. He looks you in the eyes, listens, smiles, shrugs . . . then turns his charm on the next question.

But Platini (right, standing) could not shrug off all the criticism which flooded over him after France's disastrous display at Euro '92. Two weeks after a dispirited, Napoleonic retreat from Sweden, Platini had quit. Assistant Gerard Houllier takes over the marshal's baton.

The sad irony of the slow-fuse European Championship is that Platini's France had to shoulder much of the blame.

Michel Hidalgo, manager of the French team proclaimed glorious champions of Europe under Platini's inspiration and captaincy, summed it up for me as we walked across to the Ullevi Stadium one sunny evening.

Hidalgo said: "I don't understand why Michel should select and put out a team whose football is so against his own nature.

"As a player, Michel's football was all about technique and inspiration. Perhaps he did not have such outstanding footballers as I had in 1984. But he certainly had better footballers than our matches here suggest."

Platini, one of the great attacking talents of the modern game; Platini, whose team boasted a record 100 per cent, eight-wins-in-eight-games record in the Euro '92 qualifiers; betrayed himself with the significant omission of Christian Perez, the little Paris Saint-Germain forward who had been one of Patini's most loyal and responsive pupils — ever since he scored on his debut in Yugoslavia in Platini's first match as manager in the autumn of 1988.

Perez's absence from the starting line-up against Sweden was excused by Platini on the grounds that opening matches are nervous and tight.

Yet Perez, appearing as a second-half substitute, created the equalising goal for Jean-Pierre Papin. And Perez, mobile and difficult to pin down, made France play in the closing stages.

France moved down to Malmo, to face England. The evidence of England's first match, against Denmark, was of an injury-ravaged team at the mercy of French technique and creative talent. Surely Perez would start this time and snip England's tactically-tormented defence into tiny pieces? Nothing of the sort.

Damaging . . . the omission of Christian Perez was a mistake.

Platini pays his own price

Platini, a leading light of the Football 2000 commission appointed by FIFA to bring a more positive face to the game. Now that reputation, that record and all those good intentions have been compromised by the team which carried his managerial stamp.

Yet Platini, it now emerges had gone into the event in a negative state of mind. He already had hinted to senior players that, whatever happened in Sweden, he had no desire to continue in the managerial rat race.

Perhaps that goes some way towards explaining why, in the Euro '92 opener against Sweden, Platini

Platini did make changes. But it was not Perez who swapped a place on the bench for a place out in the sun, but the veteran anchor man, Luis Fernandez.

Perez, eventually, did share in the game but only in the final quarter of an hour. Much too late to influence a team whose sole objective was the single point a goalless draw would bring.

That France, with so much talent and creative potential, should play the percentage game was little short of disgraceful.

England or Germany, with their injuries to key players. Scotland, as Group Two's rank outsiders. Late-comers Denmark. But not France, built around a Marseille side who dominate the French game and maintain the highest aspirations at international club level.

Initially, Platini was unrepentant. He seized the microphone, after one media conference apparently had ended, and said: "I know people want three or four goals every game. I would love that. But you (the media) know exactly the situation we are in. This is a competition. We must go as far as we can — otherwise you would be the first to complain, and quite properly. That's your job.

"Now you must understand mine. Our priority is not to concede a goal against difficult opponents. After all, remember, this is the championship of Europe with the best eight teams.

"I could write a book about what football should be like — and how it should be played. But I have to take the game as I find it. I have no choice."

Platini the pragmatist or Platini the prisoner? Neither role sat comfortably alongside the memories he left as a player.

At 21 he was starring at the 1976 Olympics in Montreal. Two years later he was shining at the World Cup finals in Argentina. Four years more and he propelled himself from the World Cup semi-finals to a millionaire's contract with Juventus.

Platini was then greater than Diego Maradona. The Argentine prodigy was the greater technical master. But Platini was the great achiever.

Michels finds a good time to go

NEW coach Dick Advocaat, ironically, could benefit from Holland's failure to retain their European crown.

The reasons have everything to do with the intellectual split within the Dutch camp at Euro '92. Certainly there was none of the open bickering about choice of manager or players, as at the 1990 World Cup.

But undercurrents of unrest had been evident ever since Ajax Amsterdam won the UEFA Cup in May.

Ajax had demonstrated on one of the European game's major stages, that they had players and a particular style different from the Holland team with which Rinus Michels (below) took on his seven rival nations in Sweden.

After the semi-final penalty shoot-out defeat by Denmark in Gothenburg, Michels was stoical as ever.

He dismissed suggestions that he was upset at ending his remarkable managerial career in such a way, and said: "I have enjoyed many wonderful moments in my career. This is just one moment. It will pass. And it does not change all the rest."

Michels' career has been littered with success, from his early days building Ajax into the "total football" machine in the late 1960s and early 1970s to his European Championship triumph with Holland in Munich four years ago.

But throughout the tournament in Sweden Michels had to guard his back against some fellow coaches, officials and media who believed Holland's best chance of retaining their crown was to pick Ajax virtually en bloc.

Nobody expected Michels to sacrifice the Milan trio of Ruud Gullit, Marco Van Basten and Frank Rijkaard. But the inclusion of the likes of Jan Wouters (Bayern Munich), Rob Witschge (Feyenoord) and Berry Van Aerle and Addri Van Tiggelen (both PSV) was not accepted with such unanimity.

Ronald Koeman was known to want more imaginative partners around and in front of him. But Ajax playmakers Wim Jonk and Lazio-bound Aron Winter appeared only occasionally as substitutes.

Michels was irritated on overhearing a TV interview in which Ajax coach Louis Van Gaal suggested the national coach should "lift" his team. Also, for the first time I can remember, Michels was clearly reading press comment about his team and tactics.

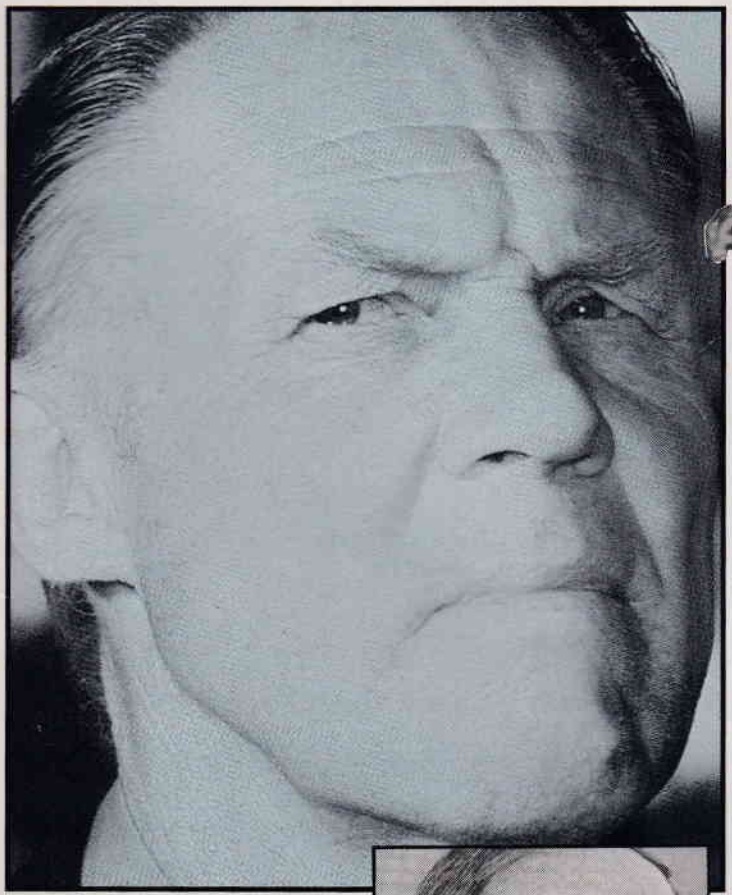
In some intense — albeit always polite — exchanges with the Dutch media Michels deftly played off the opinion of one newspaper against another.

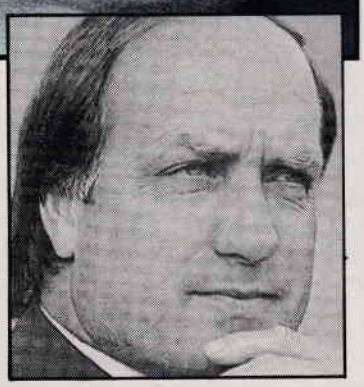
So perhaps defeat was the best outcome for Holland. Victory under Michels would have tied new coach Advocaat's hands in the World Cup qualifiers this coming season. He could hardly dismantle a team of European champions. Now, however, Advocaat has been handed carte blanche to start from scratch.

He will need to ask himself how much longer Gullit can be an international force? How best can he deploy in attack both Van Basten and Bergkamp? Can Michels' innovative 3-3-3-1 tactical shape serve any further purpose?

Advocaat's task is unenviable. He knows that Michels (retired but not reclusive), Barcelona boss Johan Cruyff (already lined up to run the show at USA '94) and a shocked public, who had expected Denmark to be torn to shreds, will be looking over his shoulder.

A long time may elapse before Holland recapture even the comparative peace with which they approached Euro '92.





He was top scorer in Italy three years in a row; he won a hat-trick of accolades as European Footballer of the Year; he won the World Club Cup, the European Champions' Cup, Cup-winners' Cup and Super Cup. For France he scored a record 41 goals in 72 internationals.

Such a pity to see it all tarnished. Obviously, Platini thought so, too. His next role, almost certainly is to head France's hosting effort for the 1998 World Cup finals. He can do so with his reputation intact . . . just about.

Declining . . . can Ruud Gullitt (above) still be a threat at international level?

Daunting . . . Advocaat (left) faces problems, with Michels and Cruyff watching closely.

WERDER BREMEN

Otto's European puzzle

Bremen's Cup-winners' Cup campaign starts on their doorstep

WERDER BREMEN, holders of the Cup-winners' Cup, should have been happy with the first round draw in their title defence.

They face only Second Division opposition.

The problem is that the opposition is provided by Hannover 96 — fellow Germans blessed with a paticular insight into ways and means of upsetting their cousins from the nearby north-west.

The Bremen-Hannover tie was the last to be made in the Cup-winners' Cup draw in Geneva. Werder certainly felt that, of all Europe's defending champions, they had the worst of luck.

Barcelona, in the Champions' Cup are unlikely to be tested by Norway's Viking Stavanger, while UEFA Cup-holders Ajax Amsterdam — despite losing Winter and Van't Schip to Italy — have too much fire power for Austria Salzburg.

But Bremen coach Otto Rehhagel finds himself up against a challenge from down the autobahn which is one of the most fascinating since he began his present stint in April, 1981.

At the time the battle was not in Europe, but to gain promotion. Coach Otto Knefler had been hurt in a car crash. With three months of the season remaining, the board turned to Rehhagel.

"I had spent four months of 1976 as a stop-gap coach at Werder," says Rehhagel. "I thought this would be temporary as well. I could not imagine that I would still be here over a decade later.

"But we achieved promotion and ever since then the club has gone from strength to strength. We established ourselves among the best teams in Germany, qualified for Europe, finally won the championship in 1988, and have now won the German Cup and the Cup-winners' Cup.

"Clubs do not have to change their coach every season or two in order to be successful. I am proud that my 11 years at Werder proves the contrary."

Rehhagel's record with Werder is certainly impressive — runners-up three times, 1982-83, 1984-85 and

Werder's players celebrate their Cup-winners' Cup victory against Monaco.

1985-86, and champions in 1987-88. Indeed, Werder have never finished lower than seventh under Rehhagel, and they also have had considerable success in cup competitions: UEFA Cup semi-finals in 1988 and 1990, three successive German Cup finals, and now a European title.

"Our teamwork is usually our great strength," says Rehhagel.

"I cannot accept it when our detractors call us negative. A team which has attacking talent such as Klaus Allofs, Wynton Rufer, Frank Neubarth and now young Marco Bode cannot be described as boring."

Werder Bremen were founded in February 1899 by a group of 15 schoolboys. Their passion for soccer had been fuelled by visits to England and the youngsters were determined to set up their own club in Bremen.

A pitch was found by the River Weser in the city's Werder district, and money was collected for shirts and a ball. Sports-Verein Werder Bremen were ready for kick-off.

But in keeping with Germany's social and political upheaval of the first half of the 20th century, times were tough for Werder in their formative years.

During the First World War their wooden grandstand was destroyed by lightning, and food shortages forced the city council to order the pitch to be dug up to grow vegetables.

Their present ground, the Weserstadion, was opened in 1921, but at the end of the Second World War Werder's home was again under threat.

In 1945 the occupying American authorities took control of the stadium and restricted its use to American football and baseball. The Weserstadion was renamed Ike Stadium — in honour of General Eisenhower.

Fortunately, the club's exile was short-lived. With the creation of the new Federal Republic, Werder — and their stars, defender Herbert Burdenski and midfielder Willi Schroder — made a welcome return to the Weser.

Local businessmen began to help finance new signings and in 1961 Werder claimed their first trophy when they defeated Kaiserslautern 2-0 to win the German Cup.

Invited

For the 1963-64 season full professional football was introduced in West Germany and Werder were among the 16 clubs invited to take part in the first Bundesliga.

They finished 10th that year, with the best yet to come. In the following season, coach Willi Multhaup led the club to the championship.

The title-winning side included keeper Gunter Bernard and the full-back pairing of West German international Horst-Dieter Hottges and Sepp Piontek — later to become the manager of Denmark and Turkey.

But Werder could not maintain such high standards and the club's fall was painful. Debts began to mount and in 1980 they were relegated, conceding 93 League goals.

Three men were largely responsible for the club's renaissance. Coach Otto Knefler and his replacement, Rehhagel, guided Werder back to the Bundesliga at the first attempt. New general manager Willi Lemke operated skilfully to restore Bremen's financial well being.

At the start of the 1981-82 season Rehhagel declared that Werder's main goal was to stay up He need not have worried. Players such as veteran sweeper Klaus Fichtel and striker Uwe Reinders excelled, and the club surpassed all expectations with fifth place in the Bundesliga.

Klaus Allofs celebrates scoring Werder's first goal against Monaco (above), Wynton Rufer slides home the second (below).

Bremen was fast developing into a seat of power in German football and in the next four years they were league runners-up on three occasions.

Indeed they were twice denied the crown on goal difference. In 1983 they were pipped by northern rivals Hamburg and three years later Bayern Munich snatched the title.

Werder had led the Bundesliga for most of that season and had wasted a golden opportunity to clinch the title when they faced Bayern in the championship's penultimate round.

The vital match appeared to be drifting towards a goal-less draw when Bremen were awarded a penalty five minutes from time. A successful kick would have put Werder four points clear at the top of the table with one game left. But Michael Kutzop missed and Bayern remained two points adrift.

Kutzop's miss was to prove fatal to Bremen's hopes during the final act of the season. While Bayern crushed Borussia Monchengladbach 6-0, Werder lost 2-1 at Stuttgart. Bayern were champions on goal difference.

"The difference between Werder and us is experience," said Bayern coach Udo Lattek. "We are used to pressure. Werder could not cope with it.

"This is my 12th trophy. Otto Rehhagel's only success came when he won the German Cup with Fortuna Dusseldorf. It was logical that my team should come out on top." Two years later, Lattek would regret such harsh words. He was then in charge at Koln, but could not prevent Rehhagel's Werder from winning the 1987-88 Bundesliga.

Not that Werder were among the pre-season favourites. Critics pointed to the departures of experienced Austrian sweeper Bruno Pezzey to FC Tirol and Roma-bound striker Rudi Voller, and forecast hard times ahead.

Werder's impressive Weserstadion, renamed Ike Stadium during World War Two.

Pessimism was unfounded. A defence featuring young keeper Oliver Reck and Norway's Rune Bratseth conceded only 16 goals in 34 games, and the attacking trio of Frank Ordenewitz, Frank Neubarth and new signing Karlheinz Riedle more than compensated for Voller's departure.

Ended

While Werder are rightly proud of their domestic consistency of the last decade, their form in European club competition has been erratic.

In 1965 their first season in Europe ended in Champions' Cup defeat by Partizan Belgrade. Between 1983 and 1986 they suffered early UEFA Cup elimination by Lok. Leipzig, Anderlecht, Chernomorets Odessa and Atletico Madrid.

In contrast, Werder qualified for the semi-finals of the UEFA Cup in 1988 and 1990 and were knocked out on the away goals rule, by Bayer Leverkusen and Fiorentina respectively.

During those cup runs Bremen produced some of their best displays.

In the second round of the 1987-88 UEFA Cup they overturned a 4-1 loss at Moscow Spartak by winning the return 6-2. Two years later Werder thrashed Napoli 8-3 on aggregate.

"Despite our success over the years, we are not a rich club," says general manager Willi Lemke. "We do not receive any financial help from the city of Bremen and our sponsors contribute only some £350,000 per year.

"It is vital that we are well-organised and work hard to maintain our competitiveness. We have a very good youth policy and do prefer not to spend a lot on transfers.

"Bremen has an unemployment rate almost double the national average and life here can be hard.

"A successful football club can give a city and its people something to be proud of."

Werder certainly do that.

SV Werder Bremen

Founded: February 1, 1899.
Colours: White shirts/Green shorts.
Stadium: Weserstadion, 2800 Bremen 1, Germany.
President: Dr Franz Bohmert.
General manager: Willi Lemke.
Coach: Otto Rehhagel.
Honours: German League Champions 1965, 1988.
German Cup Winners 1961, 1991.
German Supercup Winners 1988.
German Amateur Champions 1966, 1985.
European Cup-winners' Cup 1992.

COACH

Otto REHHAGEL.
Aged 53 (born August 9 1938).
Responsible for transforming the club from promotion hopefuls into one of the best teams in the Bundesliga. A perfectionist who spends hours studying future opponents.

In 1981 he guided the club to promotion to the Bundesliga and since then Bremen have never finished lower than seventh. Werder have been league runners-up three times in the last decade — 1982-83, 1984-85 and 1985-86 — and in 1988 they were crowned Bundesliga champions. Bremen also won the German Cup in 1991 and the Cup-winners' Cup this year.

Rehhagel, a miner's son from the Ruhr, played for Rot-Weis Essen, Hertha Berlin and Kaiserslautern and turned to coaching in 1972. He became known as the manager to call in times of crisis, and spent relatively short spells at Saarbrucken, Offenbach Kickers, Werder Bremen, Borussia Dortmund, Arminia Bielefeld and Fortuna Dusseldorf. In April 1981 he returned to coach Werder as a placement for car-crash victim Otto Kneflet.

THE PLAYERS

Oliver RECK.
Goalkeeper.
Aged 27 (born February 27, 1965).
Reck replaced the long-serving Dieter Burdensky in the Werder goal in 1987 and immediately helped the club to the title. Signed from Offenbach Kickers in 1985, he was a West German Under-21 international on 12 occasions.

Hans-Jurgen "Hansi" GUNDELACH.
Goalkeeper.
Aged 28 (born November 29, 1963).
Under-21 cap signed from Homburg.

Jonny OTTEN.
Defender.
Aged 31 (born January 31, 1961).
Experienced left-back who has been a mainstay for Werder since arriving from SV Hagen in 1979. Made his first appearance for West Germany against Portugal in Lisbon in 1983.

Dietmar BEIERSDORFER.
Defender.
Aged 29 (born November 16, 1963).
Under-21 international, had a chequered youth career with a string of clubs, then joined Hamburg from Furth in 1986 and stayed until this summer.

Thomas SCHAAF.
Defender.
Aged 31 (born April 30, 1961).
Werder's longest-serving player. He joined the club as a 10-year-old from BBV Union Bremen and worked his way through the ranks to the first team.

Gunnar SAUER.
Defender.
Aged 27 (born June 11, 1964).
Came to prominence in Werder's title-winning season of 1987-88. Was in the West German squad for the 1988 European Championship, but yet to make his full debut. Began his career at SV Cuxhaven and helped Werder to the national amateur title in 1985.

Rune BRATSETH.
Defender.
Aged 31 (born March 19, 1961).
Central defender rated by Rehhagel as "the best professional I've worked with." Played for Nidelo and Rosenborg Trondheim in his native Norway before Werder bought him in 1987. Excellent in the air, with 40 caps.

Ulrich BOROWKA.
Defender.
Aged 30 (born May 19, 1962).
Tough-tackling utility defender who has proved an inspirational force for the past five seasons. Went to Werder in 1987 after seven years with Borussia Mg. Has six full caps.

Manfred BOCKENFELD.
Defender/Midfield.
Aged 31 (born July 23, 1960).
Signed from Waldhof Mannheim in 1989. Won his only cap against Bulgaria in 1984. Previously with Dusseldorf, Bocholt and FC Oeding.

Gunter HERMANN.
Midfield.
Aged 31 (born December 5, 1960).
Has had 12 seasons in Bremen. Formerly with RSV Rehburg and FC Stadthagen. Made his full international debut in a friendly against the Soviet Union in September 1988.

Dieter ELITS.
Midfield.
Aged 27 (born December 13, 1964).
Werder's most improved player, and may well earn a national call-up. Joined Werder from SV Hage in 1984.

Miroslav VOTAVA.
Midfield.
Aged 36 (born April 25, 1956).
Prague-born "Mirko" is still a creative influence in midfield. Joined Bremen in 1985 from Atletico Madrid. Made his name at Borussia Dortmund and played five times for West Germany.

Thorsten LEGAT.
Midfield.
Aged 23 (born November 7, 1968).
Signed last summer from VfL Bochum. An Under-21 international who began his career at TuS Vorwarts-Werne 09.

Kay WENSCHLAG.
Midfield.
Aged 22 (born February 25, 1970).
Previously with Rotation Berlin, Stahl Brandenburg and Dynamo Berlin.

Uwe HARTTGEN.
Midfield.
Aged 27 (born July 6, 1964).
Local boy signed from FC Mahndorf.

Thomas WOLTER.
Midfield.
Aged 28 (born October 4, 1963).
Combative midfielder who signed from Hamburg junior side HEBC in 1984.

Klaus ALLOFS.
Forward.
Aged 35 (born December 5, 1956).
Veteran who arrived in Bremen in the autumn of 1990 from Bordeaux. Began his career at TuS Gerresheim and then had spells at Fortuna Dusseldorf and Koln. Moved to Marseille in 1987 and helped them to a League-and-Cup double in 1988-89. A few weeks later he was sold to Bordeaux. Capped 56 times for West Germany.

Frank NEUBARTH.
Forward.
Aged 29 (born July 29, 1962).
A regular scorer for Werder since signing from Concordia Hamburg in 1982. His only full international appearance was in the 1988 friendly victory over Argentina in Berlin.

Marco BODE.
Forward.
Aged 22 (born July 23, 1969).
Young attacker of much promise who left VFR Osterode for Werder in 1988. A German Under-21 international.

Stefan KOHN.
Forward.
Aged 26 (born October 9, 1965).
Bought from VfL Bochum last summer, after playing for Hanover, Leverkusen, Armina Bielefeld, Stuttgarter Kickers and VfR Aalen. A German Under-21 and youth cap.

Wynton RUFER.
Forward.
Aged 29 (born December 29, 1962).
Prolific scorer from New Zealand. Spent seven years in Swiss football with FC Zurich, Aarau and Grasshoppers, before moving to Bremen in 1989. Capped 30 times, and played in the 1982 World Cup as a 19-year-old.

Andreas "Andy" HERZOG.
Forward.
Aged 23 (born September 10, 1968).
Austrian international who cost a Bremen record £1.3 million this summer from Rapid Vienna. Played for Austria at the 1990 World Cup finals after a loan spell with First Vienna.

EUROPEAN CUP DRAWS

EUROPEAN CUP
PRELIMINARY ROUND
Shelbourne (Rol) v Tavria Simferopol (Ukr)
Valetta (Mal) v Maccabi Tel Aviv (Isr)
Klaksvikar Itrottarfelage (Fl) v Skonto Riga (Lat)
Olimpija Ljubljana (Slo) v Norma Tallinn (Est)

1ST ROUND
Milan (Ita) v Olimpija Ljubljana or Norma Tallinn
Lech Poznan (Pol) v Klaksvikar Itrottarfelage or Skonto Riga
PSV Eindhoven (Hol) v Zalgiris Vilnius (Lit)
Barcelona (Spa) v Viking Stavanger (Nor)
Kuusysi Lahti (Fin) v Dinamo Bucharest (Rom)
Rangers v Lyngby (Den)
Slovan Bratislava (Cze) v Ferencvaros (Hun)
Austria Memphis (Aut) v CSKA Sofia (Bul)
Sion (Swi) v Shelbourne or Tavria Simferopol
US Luxembourg (Lux) v FC Porto (Por)
Vikingur Reykjavik (Ice) v CSKA Moscow (Rus)
Club Brugge (Bel) v Valletta or Maccabi Tel Aviv
AEK Athens (Gre) v APOEL (Cyp)
IFK Gothenburg (Swe) v Besiktas Istanbul (Tur)
Glentoran (NI) v Marseille (Fra)
VfB Stuttgart (Ger) v Leeds United.

CUP-WINNERS' CUP
PRELIMINARY ROUND
Maribor Branik (Slo) v Hamrun Spartans (Mal)
Stromsgodset (Nor) v Hapoel Petah Tikva (Isr)
Vaduz (Lie) v Odessa (Ukr)
Boltfelagid 1936 (Fl) v Beggen (Lux)

1ST ROUND
Monaco (Fra) v Miedz Legnica (Pol)
Trabzonspor (Tur) v Palloseura (Fin)
Bohemians (Rol) v Steaua Bucharest (Rom)
Olympiakos (Gre) v Vaduz or Odessa
Valur (Ice) v Boavista (Por)
Airdrie v Sparta Prague (Cze)
Glenavon (NI) v Antwerp (Bel)
Admira Wacker (Aut) v Cardiff (Wal)
Parma (Ita) v Ujpesti Torna Egylet (Hun)
AIK Stockholm (Swe) v Aarhus (Den)
Boltfelagid 1936 or Beggen v Moscow Spartak (Rus)
Liverpool v Apollon (Cyp)
Levski Sofia (Bul) v Lucerne (Swi)
Maribor Branik or Hamrun Spartans v Atletico Madrid (Spa)
Feyenoord (Hol) v Stromsgodset or Hapoel Petah Tikva
Werder Bremen (Ger) v Hanover (Ger)

UEFA CUP
1ST ROUND
Hibernian v Anderlecht (Bel)
Valencia (Spa) v Napoli (Ita)
Vitesse Arnhem (Hol) v Derry City (Rol)
Neuchatel Xamax (Swi) v Frem (Den)
Salzburg (Aut) v Ajax (Hol)
Real Sociedcad (Spa) v Vitora Guimaraes (Por)
Sheffield Wednesday v Spora Luxembourg
Paris SG (Fra) v PAOK Salonika (Gre)
Orebro (Swe) v Mechelen (Bel)
Caen (Fra) v Real Zaragoza (Spa)
Vac Izzo (Hun) v Groningen (Hol)
Fram (Ice) v Kaiserslautern (Ger)
Manchester United v Moscow Torpedo (Rus)
Koln (Ger) v Celtic
Portadown (NI) v Standard Liege (Bel)
Palloilijat (Fin) v FC Kobenhavn (Den)
Widzew Lodz (Pol) v Eintracht Frankfurt (Ger)
Norrkoping (Swe) v Torino (Ita)
Hearts v Slavia Prague (Cze)
Moscow Dynamo (Rus) v Rosenborg (Nor)
Juventus (Ita) v Famagusta (Cyp)
Locomotiv Plovdiv (Bul) v Auxerre (Fra)
Kiev Dynamo (Ukr) v Rapid Vienna (Aut)
Panathinaikos (Gre) v Electr. Craiova (Rom)
Benfica (Por) v Belvedur Izola (Slo)
Swarovski Tirol (Aut) v AS Roma (Ita)
Sigma Olomouc (Cze) v Univ. Craiova (Rom)
Katowice (Pol) v Galatasaray (Tur)
Floriana (Mal) v Borussia Dortmund (Ger)
Real Madrid (Spa) v Pol. Timisoara (Rom)
Botev Plovdiv (Bul) v Fenerbahce (Tur)
Grasshopper (Swi) v Sporting Lisbon (Por).

● Preliminary round matches to be played August 19 and September 2.

FACE FACE

SEPP BLATTER is general secretary of FIFA, the right-hand man to president Joao Havelange and an increasingly "visible" influence in his own right.
Blatter has made cracking down on poor refereeing a personal crusade — an issue which has placed him firmly in the World Cup spotlight.

More and more of the whispering in the corridors of power suggest that Blatter may, one day, be the obvious candidate as Havelange's eventual successor.
In this FACE TO FACE interview he tells Keir Radnedge about his views on FIFA's role, on changing the Laws of the Game . . . and on his own future.

FIFA President Havelange (left) with Blatter at the World Cup Draw in New York last December.

Following the FIFA path

Secretary Sepp tells of problems and progress

The new nations applying for membership of the international football family want everything at once — FIFA membership and a place in the World Cup. Does that cause particular problems?

SB: They must appreciate it's like this: to become members of FIFA, countries have to go through the same procedures as they do when they become members of the United Nations or the European Community. They have to fulfil all the proper conditions. In the same way, entry into the various competitions of FIFA must wait until the countries have fulfilled our proper conditions.

Such as ?

SB: They must have proper football organisations. Proper leagues. Proper training grounds and facilities. Also, in this modern world, the communications technology is crucial. A lot of the new countries face problems because they don't have the necessary communications. And that means not only efficient telephone and fax services but also proper road and transport and international links.

In this changing world, with a continuing increase in FIFA membership, do you think FIFA's current structures are adequate to cope? For example, is Asia viable when it stretches . . .

SB: You mean from the Middle East to Japan. I understand.

Perhaps it should be split?

SB: Something like this has been discussed. But the arrangement of the regional confederations is still the

correct way to arrange our business. However, having said that, there is nothing to stop federations organising themselves in whatever way seems appropriate as long as they stay within those regional groupings.

Inter-continental jet travel is now common in business. Will it soon be a adopted by FIFA for the World Cup qualification rounds — at least within north-south time zones, such as Europe/Africa, North/South America ?

SB: The possibility of inter-continental qualifying rounds within time zones for the World Cup has been discussed but not since Mr Tessema was president of the African confederation. At that time the Africans were against the idea because they feared they would always be playing the Europeans and none of their teams would ever get to the finals. They preferred to be secure with the number of finalists they were allocated . . .

You mean, rather than take their chance on the pitch — putting their football where their mouth is, so to speak ?

SB: How you interpret this is up to you!

The International Board, at FIFA's instigation, has banned the back pass. But if, as you often say, the problem is one of attitude, is changing the laws the right way ? Would it not be better to change tournament regulations — such as instituting three points for a win in FIFA tournaments?

SB: Certainly, we have to change attitudes. We have to be more respectul of our responsibilities to our public. Matches are supposed to last 90 minutes but sometimes we lose up to 50 minutes in a game. It's the time-wasting tactics we have to confront and that has meant, in particular, passing back to the goalkeeper. This is now coming into force. But I don't think changing from two to three points for a win would make any difference.

A very positive difference was noticed when it was introduced in England. Teams used to shut up shop if they were all square after an hour. All that changed.

SB: Yes, but in England, for example, you still play positive, entertaining football. English players are renowned for giving everything over the full 90 minutes. It is an honest style of football. I don't think the three-points argument has any significance.

Honest . . . English football (left) has a reputation for being totally committed.

Fair . . . using age-limit competitions (below) is a good way of testing changes on different styles of football.

Still on the subject of rule changes, is it fair to use teenagers, in the finals tournaments of FIFA's age-limit competitions, as guinea-pigs for rule-change ideas ?

SB: This is to misunderstand our thinking. We have used FIFA competitions, such as the finals of the under-16s, because we wanted to make such studies as broad as possible, so that it encompasses players with many different styles of football from all over the world. We think that is much better than using one particular league in a single country. The intention is certainly not to abuse the youth competitions.

You are the manager of a major organisation. Continuity of managerial control is important for every successful business operation. President Havelange is in remarkable health for a man of 77 but he has said he does not wish to go on for ever. You have been spoken of as the right man to be his successor. Has this talk reached your ears?

SB: Firstly, I don't know if I would be the right man for the job. Secondly, there is no presidential election pending. Dr Havelange has had some minor health problems but he was back, fighting fit, at the FIFA Congress in Zurich. All I can say is this: I am not only general secretary of FIFA, I am also the Chief Executive . . . and I am comfortable where I am.

FIFA *decisions . . .*

❖ FIFA's Congress and Executive Committee, meeting in Zurich, decided....

To award the 1998 World Cup finals to France. The vote was France 12, Morocco 7, Switzerland's bid was excluded by the Executive Committee on the grounds that plans to use temporary stands were outside FIFA's competition regulations (original bidders England, Brazil, Portugal, India, Chile and Nigeria had withdrawn from competition long beforehand).

To award FIFA's golden order of merit to Sir Stanley Matthews, Antonio Carbajal (Mexico's goalkeeper in a record five World Cup finals tournaments) and Mario Zagalo (Brazilian World Cup-winner as player in 1958 and 1962 and manager in 1970).

To award the 1992 FIFA Fair Play Award to the Brazilian defender Jorginho, of Bayern Munich.

To reject a bid by African and Asian delegates to shift the balance of Executive Committee power. A proposal (from Egypt, Tunisia and Cameroon) that Africa, Asia and CONCACAF each be granted an extra seat (and vote) on the 21-strong Executive Committee was approved by only 56 - 50, thus failing to gain the necessary two-thirds majority.

To admit 12 new nations into FIFA, most notably South Africa but also Russia, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Ukraine, Namibia, South Africa, Croatia, Slovenia, the Cayman Islands, and St. Kitts and Nevis.To confirm the reconstitution as FIFA members of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania - thus taking FIFA's membership up to 178.

To defer consideration of applications from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kirghizia, Moldova, Uzbekistan, Tadzhikistan and Turkmenistan (all republics of the former Soviet Union) and Mongolia.

To accept Russia as successor to the CIS/Soviet Union in both political and competitive (i.e. World Cup) sectors . . . but NOT to provide exceptional late World Cup entrance to Ukraine, Georgia, Belarus and Armenia.

To consider allowing South Africa to replace Burkino Faso (withdrawn) in the African zone of the 1994 World Cup qualifiers, and to consider allowing Namibia to take part.

To prepare regulations banning clubs from "parking" newly-signed players with other clubs in the same country.

To lift the international suspension imposed on Flamengo of Rio de Janeiro now that the club had withdrawn a civil court action against the Brazilian Confederation.

To fine the Romanian Federation £20,000 for allowing Dinamo Bucharest to play friendly matches in unrecognised, Turkish-occupied Northern Cyprus.

To fine Uruguay £20,000 for wearing shirt adverts in international matches.

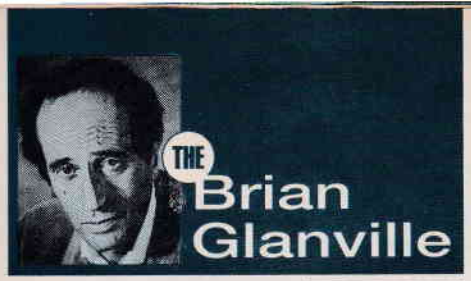
To confirm the worldwide suspension of Yugoslavia (and thus Yugoslav clubs) pending the lifting of United Nations sanctions. This includes suspension of Yugoslavia from the World Cup qualifiers.

To extend a temporary ban on temporary stands (pending a full report from the French Federation on the Corsica stadium disaster).

To award the 1995 World Junior Cup to Nigeria and the 1977 World Junior Cup to Malaysia.

To reinstate Nigeria and Uganda, whose membership had been suspended earlier this year because of government interference in the running of their federations.

To reject a proposal by several federations to let referees wear advertising logos.



THE Brian Glanville COLUMN

BIFF! BANG! WRONG

SUDDENLY, the Dutch are neither loveable nor unbeatable. Welcome news to the much maligned Graham Taylor, whose battered England team must meet them in the World Cup qualifiers.

In going out of the European Championship finals the Dutch showed first that they were fallible, secondly that they could be deplorable. I started wanting Denmark to win when Koeman, shown up for speed, chopped down Povlsen on the edge of the box. The pathetic Spanish referee, Aladren, did not even book Koeman. Inevitably, there was still worse to come.

In the second half, a wretchedly crude foul by Rijkaard on Laudrup, who had been running the slow, ageing Dutch defence ragged, put that excellent player out of the game, took the pressure off the Dutch, and enabled them to get back into the game.

Deplorable . . . Koeman's challenge on Povlsen deserved at least a booking.

Still, Holland went out in the end on penalties, and good riddance.

I believe that if the tiring Dutch had got to the Final, the Germans would have beaten them. One meets everyone in life twice, said Berti Vogts, after that Dutch defeat. It could well have been second time lucky for the Germans.

Old age condemned the Dutch to defeat against the Danes. People wondered why Ruud Gullit had done so little in that game. Given his age and the infinity of knee operations the poor fellow has undergone, why should he have been expected to do any more?

Graham Taylor, who made so many

Sadly we're stuck with Taylor

tactical errors in the tournament, might have obtained some consolation from the errors Rinus Michels made in his last game as Holland's team manager. Seeing how Gullit was struggling on the wing, why on earth hadn't he the sense to take him off and put on Aaron Winter, who, when incorporated as sub against the Germans, had promptly beaten Matthias Sammer all ends up on the right flank, and set up a goal?

Germany had enough chances to score four or five against the Danes, but bad luck, inadequate finishing and, above all, glorious goalkeeping ensured that the Danish goal remained intact. That, plus one superlative last-ditch tackle by the splendid sweeper, Lars Olsen.

Utterly out of his depth as Taylor was, England could still so easily have reached the semi-finals had the profligate Tony Daley put away one of those two marvellous chances he wasted in the course of a single minute, in the third match.

Sweden were on their knees at that moment, and they would never have come back against a second goal.

From the first, I thought England, however poor and however poorly led, quite capable of surviving in the far weaker group. As long ago as the qualifying game in Turkey, when England so unimpressively scraped through, I'd written that Taylor should beware about all of the waters closing over his head. Now, effectively, they have, but of course he will survive. England managers usually do.

Walter Winterbottom, the first, was appointed in 1946, and remained in office, courtesy of Sir Stanley Rous, until 1962. This despite defeat by the United States at Belo Horizonte in the 1950 World Cup, plus and by 6-3 at home and 7-1 in Budapest, by Hungary, in 1953-54.

Winterbottom did at least have the excuse that he was not picking the team. A board of selectors who could

Danish memory lane

DENMARK were the first Continentals really to take to the game and to issue any kind of a challenge to English football. Big, strong and direct then, in the English way, they contested the Olympic football finals in 1908, at the White City, after thrashing the French, and in 1912 in Stockholm.

On each occasion, they gave the powerful United Kingdom team, made up of star amateurs playing for League clubs (the great Vivian Woodward included) a substantial test — 2-0 the surprisingly narrow margin in 1908, 4-2 in 1912, when the Danes played much of the Final with ten men.

One of the bulwarks of that team was the towering defender Nils Middelboe, who later lived in England and for a time captained Chelsea. As a very young journalist, some 40 years ago, I was lucky enough to meet him, when he told me two stories of those times.

One was of a match against Preston when he tossed up with the England skipper, Joe McCall, and won. There was nothing in the weather, and Nils elected to kick-off. No, said McCall and the referee, you cannot do that; you just choose an end. In vain did Middelboe, the foreigner, protest that he was in the right. Which he was.

The other memory was of a match when the Chelsea and England centre-forward, Jack Cock, was sent off.

It was a dreadful, rain-lashed, muddy afternoon, but even without Cock, later to become the manager of Millwall, Chelsea won. A tribute, thought Middleboe, to the spirit of English footballers.

Later, he wrote a book which virtually became the bible of the game in Denmark.

Although it was, almost incredibly, 1986 before the Danes at last competed in the World Cup finals, thrashed Uruguay in Mexico, but collapsed against Spain, they continued to produce marvellous teams and players.

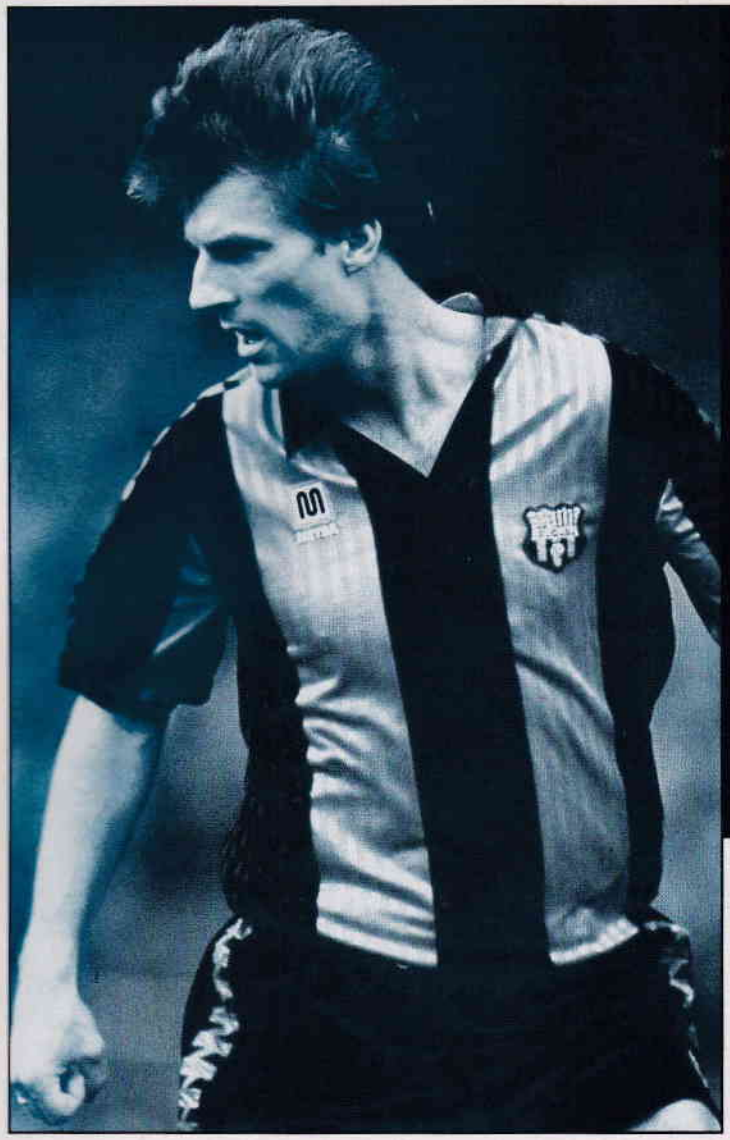
Not least in 1948 when they beat Britain 5-3 in the Olympic tournament in London, but could not stop the Swedes. Of that team, Carl Praest had played outside-left for the Rest of Europe against Britain in Glasgow in 1947.

He, John Hansen and KarlAage Hansen, via Huddersfield and Atalanta, went on to excel with Juventus.

In season 1954-55 John Hansen, so elegant on the ground, so magist-erial in the air, came to play for Lazio: and to give splendid support to their besieged English manager, George Raylor.

John felt that Danish football was destroyed when almost two whole teams left for professionalism abroad soon after 1948, leaving the youngsters to sink or swim.

Then came Flemming and Harald Nielsen and second place at the Rome Olympics. A saga indeed.



Did anybody miss MICHAEL?

DANISH football always had been a favourite of mine, and I was therefore all the more pleased to see Denmark come out on top in Sweden. Certainly I never expected it. Whoever did? Least of all when Michael Laudrup continued to refuse to play.

But when talking to the Danish players I realised that they felt Laudrup's loss was, if anything, a positive one. They functioned better as a team, they did not depend on a brilliant but unpredictable player around whom the team has to turn, one who demanded special support and attention.

Not that I'd agree with Lars Olsen, who felt that the 1992 Denmark were essentially a team without stars.

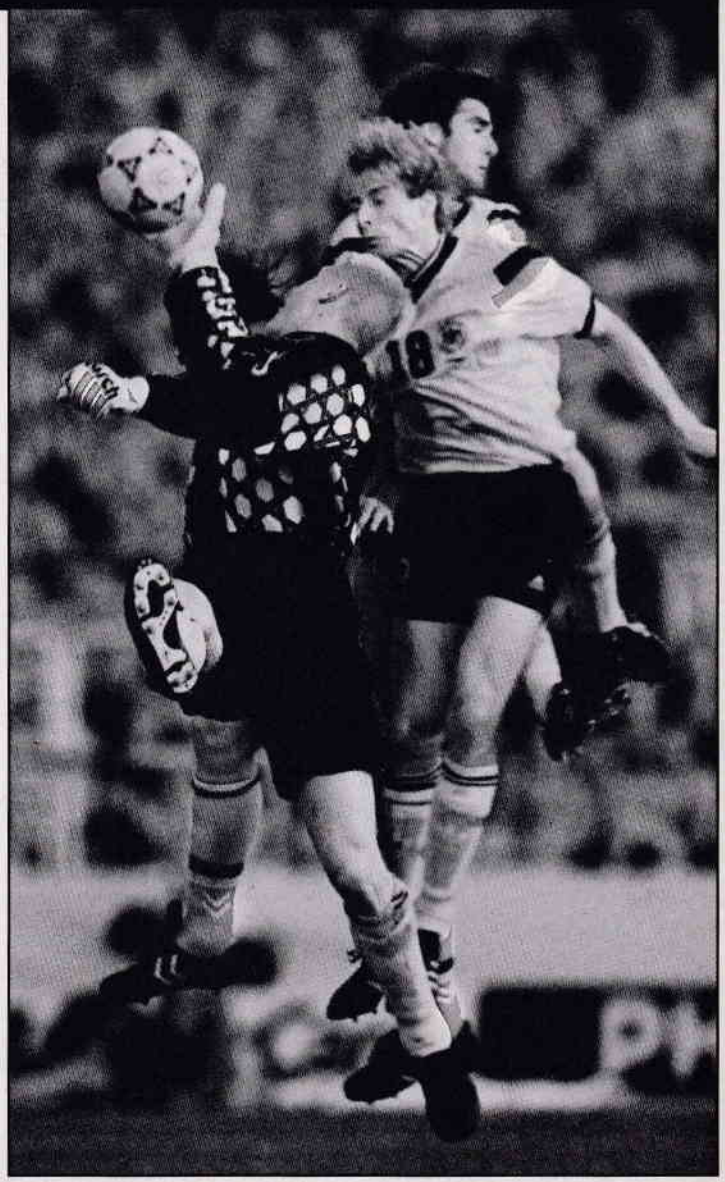
There were its stars: Brian Laudrup, younger brother of Michael, who if anything eclipsed him with his dynamic exhibitions as an attacking midfielder, and won a lucrative transfer to Fiorentina in consequence; Flemming Povlsen, who superbly carried the burden of attack when Laudrup was forced off against Holland; and Peter Schmeichel (below), who made some wonderful saves.

After the Final I asked Schmeichel whether his excellent handling of crosses (he had dropped a few against England in his team's initial game) had anything to do with his spell at Manchester United.

He replied that the English game was all about crosses and coming for crosses: of course he has improved.

I'd drink to that, remembering how he floundered in an early game against Wimbledon, flapping, big though he was, at cross after high cross. Plus the disastrous error at Old Trafford against Leeds, when he totally missed a high centre from the left, enabling Lee Chapman to head a simple goal.

After the Wimbledon game, Alex Ferguson, United's manager, was trying desperately to make excuses for Schmeichel, a Continental in English football for the first time. They didn't sound very convincing. Why spend £650,000 on a giant keeper who couldn't catch crosses?



not tell the difference between Hopkinson and Hodgkinson when choosing a goalkeeper were in charge.

By 1958 Winterbottom (above) WAS picking the team for the World Cup. England were knocked out by the Soviets in a play-off, when incredibly capping two players, Peter Broadbent and Peter Brabrook, for the first time, while ignoring Bobby Charlton.

What Taylor so desperatedly needs now is HELP: above all from someone who really knows and understands international football. I've suggested two English speakers, Gerard Houllier of France, and Morten Olsen, who once looked set to become the manager of Denmark. Another interesting idea: Ossie Ardiles.

Taylor said a lot of worrying, somewhat alarming things after England's elimination. The implication was that he would look for big players who could play the Watford Style, lots of long balls to a towering centre-forward.

I was not surprised. I never thought Taylor was wont to play in any other way. He has surely tried all sorts of tactics and formations. If they have seldom worked, it is partly because, at heart, he never really believed in them.

Biff and bang seems his game; but if he truly believes this is the English style, then he is wrong.

The history of English football is blessedly full of gifted players who have imposed their eccentric genius on the game.

Matthews, Finney, Shackleton, Mannion, and of course Gascoigne, whom Taylor very significantly and symptomatically left out of that England game in Dublin, with the truly fatuous excuse that the ball would be passing over the midfield.

The England managership is essentially a civil servant's job, and there's no Sir Harold Thompson to make paranoia work for him as he did when he got rid of a waning Alf Ramsey in 1974, so we must grin and bear Taylor until the next World Cup.

But if the geniuses of the England Senior International Committee cannot see that he desperately needs a hand, they are not the mighty minds I take them to be.

PRESS BOX

COLIN MALAM of *The Daily Telegraph* looks at a legend's style

Really professional

Flag bearer . . . Lineker (right) waves goodbye as he prepares for a new challenge in Japan.

Foiled . . . Lineker (far right) misses the penalty against Brazil that would have equalled Bobby Charlton's record.

Finishing . . . Lineker scores against France (below right).

GOODBYE, Gary Lineker. England's deadliest marksman of the past 20 years rides off into the rising sun without his country's scoring record, but with the lasting affection of the English public and most of those who came into direct contact with him.

Lineker's line is a lesson for everyone

A revealing thing happened in Stockholm at the end of the official post-mortem on England's dismal failure to qualify for the semi-finals of the European Championship. Lineker, his final public interview over, was accorded a standing ovation by the hard-bitten press corps recording the team's sorry progress in Sweden.

That unusual gesture by men who do not give their admiration lightly was indicative of not only the esteem in which Lineker is held as a player by writers, but the extremely professional and intelligent manner in which he and his agent, Jon Holmes, handled relations with the media generally.

Nothing was too much trouble: all requests for interviews were accommodated as far as possible and Lineker responded politely, helpfully and humorously to even the daftest question. The squeaky-clean image has been promoted carefully, but the player is a nice guy anyway.

Even the potentially infuriating experience of being substituted in his last match for England did not provoke an angry response. Most footballers, deprived of one final attempt to equal Bobby Charlton's 49-goal record would have been only too glad to vent their spleen in the tabloids. Not Lineker.

He sold his story to one of the more sensational Sunday papers, right enough, but they could hardly be said to have had value for money in terms of vitriol.

There was some mild criticism of England manager Graham Taylor, though not nearly enough to justify the five-figure sum Lineker is said to have been paid for his "exclusive" thoughts on the matter.

Cloud

I am a little sad that Lineker should depart from international football under a cloud of others' making. While he had only himself to blame for missing a penalty against Brazil at Wembley in May, very few other chances went his way in the last six, personally goalless, matches he played for England.

Lineker will be missed, approaching 32 or not. These days, English football boasts so few players of true world class that it can ill afford to lose a scorer of such quality.

Grampus Eight will have that privilege (the health of Lineker's infant son permitting) when the new Japanese League gets under way next March.

For their not inconsiderable money — Lineker's two-year contract is reported to be worth as much as £3 million — the club will get perhaps the most expert finisher English football has seen since Jimmy Greaves and Denis Law, and its most universally popular figure since Bobby Charlton.

In style and technique, Lineker is more like Law than Greaves or Charlton: more a great goal-scorer than a scorer of great goals. While Greaves and Charlton had the ability to put the ball away with a flourish, and felt almost obliged to do so, Law and Lineker would be at one in just being glad to see it in the net.

Lineker is that rarity in the modern game, a specialist. At a time when the general trend has been towards versatility and interchangeability, he has concentrated almost obsessively on refining his technique within the penalty area and discovering new ways of beating the 'keeper.

Some have called that selfishness: Lineker would argue that he was simply being realistic.

He is aware of his limitations on the ball, so he applies all his considerable intelligence and pace to finishing off the creative work of others. In that sense, he has more in common with Gerd Muller of West Germany than any other striker of the post-war era.

Technique

If Lineker took anyone as a model, it was Hugo Sanchez, who scored so many goals for Real Madrid. During Lineker's three formative seasons with Barcelona, he watched the spring-heeled little Mexican Sanchez on television, and studied his penalty-area technique.

From Sanchez, Lineker learned how to "attack space" — to lose his marker with a feint and then go where no defender expected him to go. Don Howe, the former England coach, defines the manoeuvre as "making one run for the defender, and one run for

yourself."

Lineker is unusual among English footballers in having such a clinical approach to the job. Kevin Keegan always admitted to being a "manufactured" player, but it is difficult to think of one who rationalised his role quite as carefully and effectively as Lineker, the striker Johan Cruyff once forced to play on the right wing for Barcelona.

Difficult, too, to think of one who understood as clearly the long-term value of good relations with the media. Unlike so many English footballers, who see the press as the enemy unless they come armed with a cheque-book, he soon realised that approachability and courtesy could be translated into favourable publicity and money in the bank.

In many ways, Lineker always has been a man apart. Just as he improved his scoring technique by studying Hugo Sanchez, he used the clamorous pressures of the Spanish media and the other challenges of living abroad to grow and develop off the field.

When the talk turns to successful, self-made men, do not leave out Gary Lineker.

Gary LINEKER FACT BOX

Born: 30th November, 1960 in Leicester.

League career:

Club	Years	Games	Goals
Leicester City	1978-85	194	95
Everton	1985-86	41	30
Barcelona	1986-89	99	44
Tottenham	1989-92	105	67
Total		**439**	**236**

England career: 80 caps (first v Scotland 1984, last v Sweden 1992) 48 goals.

Honours: Second Division Championship (Leicester) 1979-80, FA Cup runners-up (Everton) 1986, Spanish Cup (Barcelona) 1988, Cup-winners' Cup (Barcelona) 1989, FA Cup (Tottenham) 1983, Footballer of the Year 1992.

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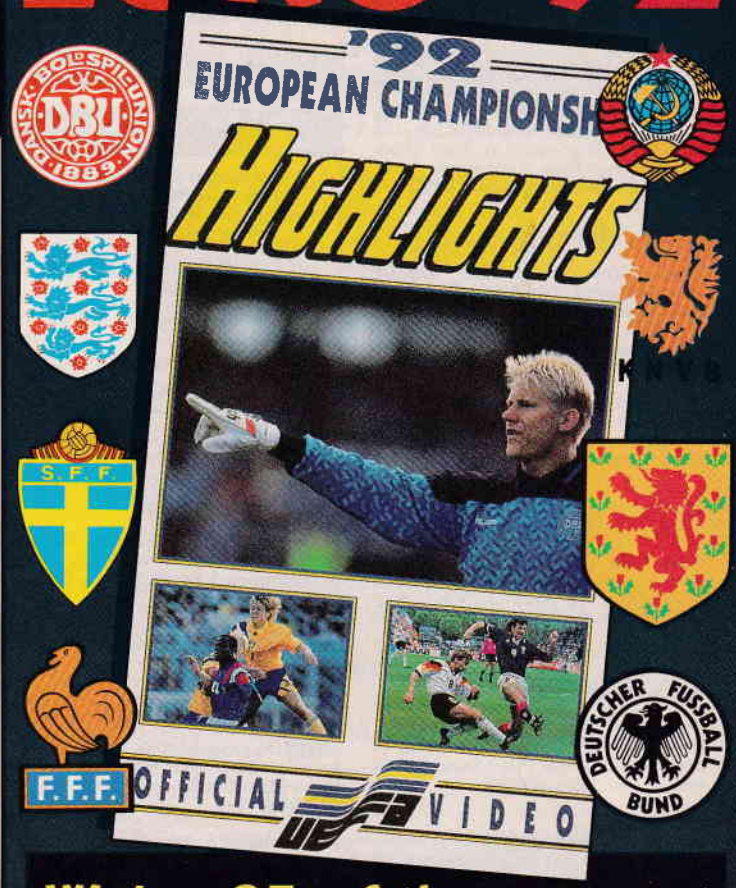

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QUESTION

Four players tied as joint top-scorers in Euro' 92 with three goals each. Bergkamp (Holland) and Larsen (Denmark) were two. Can you name the other two?

Overseas readers can enter the competition by writing to:
Euro 92 Video Competition, WORLD SOCCER, 25th Floor, King's Reach Tower, Stamford Street, London SE1 9LS before Monday 17th August, 1992.

European Championships '92 HIGHLIGHTS and **Scotland - A TRIBUTE** — both videos available from Woolworth, WH Smith, Our Price, Virgin, HMV, John Menzies and all good video stores.

PAUL GARDNER on another blow to soccer in the States

The Final Crisis

Major Soccer League's collapse is no surprise

THIS time it's for real. After years of crises and dwindling membership, the Major Soccer League — the professional indoor soccer organisation — finally went under.

The league (then, correctly, called the Major Indoor Soccer League) came on the scene in 1978. Its birth — and the early history of indoor soccer — are not exactly tributes to the common sense of the people who organise the game in the United States.

The original idea was two-fold. The outdoor North American Soccer League were worried at having to sign players on year-round contracts, and were looking to find a way of getting more playing time out of them. Off-season (which, because NASL played in the summer, meant the winter) indoor soccer was the answer.

On the other hand, a lot of club owners were frustrated by what they saw as the restrictions, imposed by FIFA, of the outdoor game.

They wanted to fiddle with the rules, to "Americanise" the game, and they saw the indoor version, then without any widely-accepted rules or FIFA control, as ideal.

They received economic support from the owners of indoor arenas, always looking for new events.

So the NASL started their first indoor season in January 1975. It was not a success, mostly because the club owners were sharply divided between those who favoured it, and those who thought the NASL should stick to the outdoor game.

After two seasons, the NASL dropped indoor soccer. But the internal split among the owners eventually proved fatal to the NASL.

In 1978 not one, but two, new groups of entrepreneurs appeared on the scene, each intent on creating a league devoted solely to the indoor game. One disappeared rapidly, but the MISL went ahead, and started playing during the 1978-79 winter.

NASL took fright, and re-started their indoor operation in 1979-80 — but with only ten of the 24 clubs participating.The NASL's indoor venture was always a half-hearted, misguided affair.

Combined

By 1982, NASL were in deep trouble, forced to go, almost cap in hand, to MISL, suggesting a combined indoor season. MISL agreed, although really only interested in trying to take over NASL's best franchise. This was the year when Cosmos — sturdy opponents until that point — agreed at last to play indoors. But it was all too late. By then MISL were the stronger league, unterested in saving a rival.

NASL clubs either folded or switched to MISL, and MISL delightedly lured the top players with higher salaries.

Within two years, MISL had triumphed. NASL were out of business. And the heaviest blow had come not from other competing sports, but from indoor soccer.

By 1985 MISL were at a zenith with a 14-team league that drew a total of over three million spectators. But the following year decline began, to 12 teams in 1986, 11 in 1987, seven in 1988.

Since then, as each MISL season finished, the rumours began that death had taken place. Somehow they always survived at the last minute.

The reality of the situation was further muddled in 1990, when MISL suggested that some clubs would like to play outdoors too.

There was only one way to view this: MISL felt the need to be attached to the upcoming World Cup.

Suddenly, MISL dropped the word "indoor" and became Major Soccer League. To complete the unreality, the new USSF appointed the MSL Commissioner, Earl Foreman, to head a committee working on the formation of a new outdoor league.

Foreman, founder of the original MISL, had never shown interest in outdoor soccer, and had been quoted as saying: "I don't give a hoot about the outdoor game." Hardly surprisingly, none of this worked. The MSL clubs played a few outdoor games, while Foreman's committee met once and then quietly disappeared.

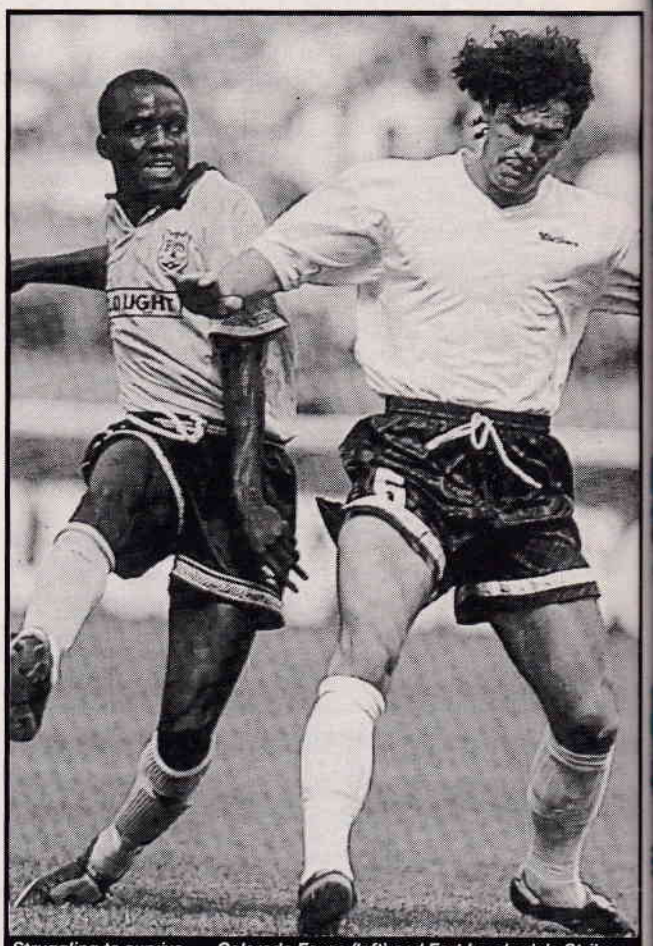
And now MSL are gone, too. I feel little regret about the disappearance of a league that always proved more of a barrier than a help to outdoor soccer's development. But the fact is that since 1984 MSL had been the only professional soccer-related league in the United States, the only league in which players could earn enough to make a living by playing soccer — if that is what indoor soccer is. This league provided an opportunity for college players.

Now that outlet has gone. Another indoor league does exist — the National Professional Soccer League — but that is semi-pro.

MSL's departure does not help soccer's image problem. For those Americans who have no time for soccer, the disappearance is further proof that the sport will never succeed here.

The collapse also creates a farcical situation within the USSF, where votes are divided equally between seniors (semi-pros and amateurs), youth and professionals. With MSL gone, one third of the USSF's voting strength now belongs with the American Professional Soccer League.

A look at the current state of the APSL (facing page) will explain why that is a worrying state of affairs.


Struggling to survive . . . Colorado Foxes (left) and Fort Lauderdale Strikers.

Writing in the rain . . . journalists at the 1990 World Cup.

Don't forget your wallet!

NO SURPRISES in the selection of sites for World Cup '94 games. With the organising committee moving office to Los Angeles, the final was bound to be in California.

The other important office site is Chicago, the Federation's base, so the Windy City got the opening game.

Semi-pro shambles struggles on

THE first thing to note about the APSL is the need to put the word "professional" in the title. You can be sure that, in American sports, only organisations which are not professional do that.

The National Football League, National Hockey League, National Basketball League, both baseball leagues — super-professional leagues all of them — do not do it. The APSL, very much a semi-pro operation, do.

Worse — there are only five teams. Of those, the Fort Lauderdale Strikers are broke, and are being run, presumably until the end of the season, by the other four.

Attendances at APSL games are low, so low that the league long ago gave up publishing them in the weekly news releases. Miami Freedom regularly draw under 1,000 to games.

Rumours persist that the league and the six-team Canadian Soccer League are trying to work out some sort of merger.

The advantages that APSL's formation were supposed to bring included the opportunity for present and future US national team players to have competitive games every week. That commendable idea has gone astray — partly because of the league's own failings, and partly because of the national team's crowded programme. American players do not see the APSL as suitable preparation for international play. They are right, of course, and they therefore try to sign with overseas — read European — clubs.

Those who stay in the US — Bruce Murray, Hugo Perez, Tony Meola — tend to sign contracts with the USSF. Those who sign for APSL clubs — Marcelo Balboa, for example, is with Colorado Foxes — find that national calls come regularly.

APSL's schedule has each team playing 16 regular-season games, followed by a play-off format beginning in September. This features the "top four teams" — meaning that only one team do not qualify.

There are no drawn games. If scores are level at 90 minutes, another 15 minutes are played. If there's still no score, then a shoot-out tie-breaker is used. Not penalty kicks, but the version used in the old NASL: the kicker starting with the ball 35 yards out, the goalkeeper free to move out to meet him — and five seconds to score.

APSL's points system also is based on the NASL. Six for a win in 90 or 105 minutes, and three for the winner in a shoot-out two to the loser. In all games, teams get one point for each goal scored (win or lose) up to a maximum of three.

The level of play is modest.

Newman honoured

THE small city of Oneonta is tucked away in the Catskill Mountains of upper New York State. Here, just off the main street on Ford Avenue, a part of American soccer history is becoming more and more significant.

Oneonta is home to a uniquely North American institution, a Sports Hall of Fame — in this case the National Soccer Hall of Fame.

American players, coaches and administrators who have made a major contribution to the game are honoured there.

The names include those of the players in the 1950 World Cup, who will for ever be remembered for their stunning upset of England.

There are some of the players of the 1930 World Cup team, who reached the semi-final, including Billy Gonsalves, often referred to as the greatest American soccer player of all time.

There are also several players with British backgrounds who have made a contribution to American soccer, including former 1920s Chelsea centre-forward Harold Brittan, Billy Fryer (Newcastle and Barnsley), Bill Jeffrey (a Scot who coached the 1950 World Cup team) and former St. Mirren player Bob Millar, who coached the 1930 World Cup team.

They are now joined by Ron Newman, who went to the USA in 1967 to play for Atlanta Chiefs in the NPSL and stayed to coach Dallas Tornado, Fort Lauderdale Strikers and San Diego Sockers of the NASL.

Newman also is credited with starting the soccer boom in Dallas and with an outstanding coaching career in indoor soccer.

Born

He was born near Portsmouth, and played for Woking, Portsmouth, Orient, Crystal Palace and Gillingham.

Werner Fricker, former President of the USSF, and former US international Efrain "Chico" Chacurian were inducted into the Hall of Fame at the same time.

Those attending the celebrations this year included Arnie Oliver, who was a member of the 1930 World Cup squad, Walter Bahr from the 1950 World Cup team, and Shannon Higgins, one of the team who won the Women's World Cup last year.

COLIN **JOSE**

Man behind the boom . . . Ron Newman (seen here in his old Portsmouth strip) has had an outstanding career in the United States.

New York (meaning Giants Stadium, New Jersey) has done well on the quantity front — seven games, including a semi-final.

Tickets? Not on sale yet — though an information service (for US residents only) has been set up.

Prices have yet to be decided, officially, but rumours are circulating of some pretty stiff figures. *La Opinion*, a Spanish-language newspaper in Los Angeles, published a set that ranged from $20-$150 for first-round games up to between $100 and $3,000 for the final.

Each journalist usually pays a deposit of $500 when he applies for accreditation to a World Cup. This is to ensure that the journalist is serious about attending, and he gets the money back during the tournament. FIFA apparently want to turn the deposit into a non-refundable fee. In other words, the hacks will have to pay to do their job. No prizes for guessing where that idea comes from. FIFA have been complaining for ages about all the seats that have to be ripped out to make room for writers.

During the World Cup in Italy, FIFA's calculations apparently revealed that a loss of some $7 million in ticket revenues because of this. No mention, of course, of how much the acres of free publicity was worth . . .

Paying to cover an event is unheard of here, where they take the phrase "freedom of the press" seriously.

Add to that the well-known hostility to soccer that exists among many of the traditional journalists, so asking American newspapers to cough up money to cover an event that many of them don't want to cover anyway hardly seems to make much sense.

Unless — it couldn't be, could it? — moneymaking is more important that spreading the gospel.

Bobby's bright start

THIS has not been a successful year for Canada. The under-23 team were eliminated from Olympic qualifying, and then the youth team, fighting for a place in the World Youth Championships, were defeated at the final hurdle.

On top of this two teams dropped out of the Canadian Soccer League, reducing the number to six.

But Canada's performance against Scotland in Toronto was heartening. Playing under new coach Bobby Lenarduzzi, Canada did extremely well against a very experienced Scottish team preparing for the European Championship.

Lenarduzzi had five of his European-based players home for the summer.

Included

Craig Forrest of Ipswich was in goal and Peter Sarantopoulos of North York Rockets swept up behind a back four of Frank Yallop (Ipswich), Randy Samuel (Fortuna Sittard), Nick Dasovic (North York Rockets), and Colin Miller (Hamilton Academicals).

The midfield included Carl Valentine of Vancouver 86ers, John Limniatis (Aris Salonika) and Norman Odinga (Vancouer 86ers), while strikers John Catliff and Domenic Mobilio also came from 86ers, the Canadian champions.

Catliff scored Canada's goal in a 3-1 defeat.

Canada had high hopes of a place in the Olympic finals, in a group that included Mexico, Honduras and the United States, but won only the last of their six games.

At about the same time the Canadian youth team, at home in the CONCACAF Youth Championship, were beaten 2-1 in the deciding game by the United States, who will go to Australia along with Mexico.

Hamilton Steelers and Kitchener Kickers have pulled out of the League.

The demise of Steelers came as a shock for they had contested four of the first five finals.

COLIN **JOSE**

letters

We welcome your letters on any topic concerning international football. Write to: Editor's Lette World Soccer, 25th Floor, King's Reach Tower, Stamford Street, London SE1 9LS. We regret t Information Desk queries (no long lists please) can be dealt with only through this column.

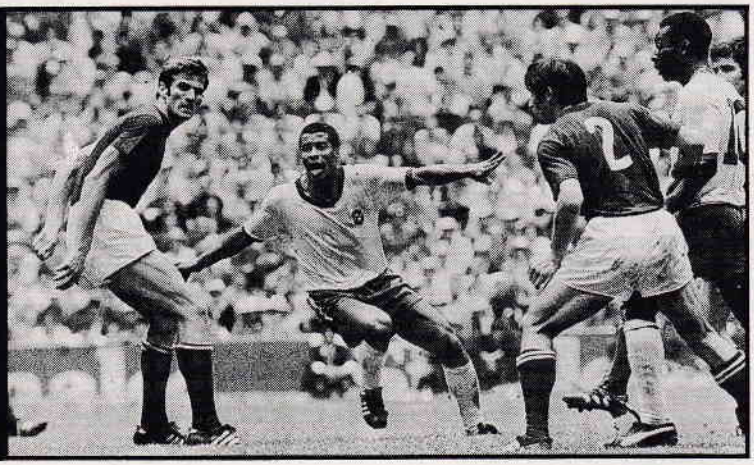
Simply the best

SIR — I am glad that the all-time greatest team from the European Championship finals included two Italian defenders, Baresi and Facchetti.

You have to be something special to beat Baresi. He is like a brick wall. And Facchetti (right) was the best left-back ever.

Maldini of the current Italian squad and Gentile, a member of the 1982 World Cup-winners, are other greats. Truly Italy produces the world's best defenders.

— DOMENICO SCORDO, Aylesbury, Bucks, England



Stop meddling

SIR — Once again FIFA in their inf wisdom, have decided to interfere the laws. I refer to the ridicu amendment to the back pass rule. back pass in itself has been the so of countless goals over the years. N after a FIFA study which showed th the West Germany v UAE match at '90, each goalkeeper had the bal four minutes, a defender's "kick back pass, cannot be handled by goalkeeper (only passes by hea chest!)

So what will a defender do, w facing his own goal with oppon bearing down on him, and knowing they will chase any attempt at a b pass? He will blast the ball as far o play as he can.

How many minutes will be retrieving balls from the top tier stands, from moats, or from unwilling to return them?

And what of local leagues aroun world? Village and pub teams will how many minutes retrieving b Without the luxury of spare balls.

Why do FIFA insist on messing the laws? After all, time-was professional fouls, feigning in diving for penalties etc, all can be with by referees interpreting existing laws correctly and consiste

— MICHAEL WHIGHT, Ipswich, Su Eng

New rule is dreadful

SIR — FIFA's new rule that effectively outlaws back-passes to goalkeepers will affect football at all levels. As an amateur club footballer, I play my football, like millions of other people worldwide, on park pitches and sports clubs.

As a defender, I very often find myself in a position where I have to pass back to my goalkeeper. With this new rule, I would be forced to hoof the ball into touch, which in itself requires no skill at all, as opposed to a carefully weighted back-pass.

Many readers are club players and will understand the problems this will cause; opposing players having to chase after the ball to retrieve it (sometimes having to wait till a player on the adjacent pitch can kick it back), or even worse, a player or spectator having to climb over a fence or even a railway line to get the ball back. Think how much time this wastes.

This rule penalises grassroots clubs and footballers the world over.

— MARK WELLS, East Dulwich, London.

Fair point

SIR — One solution to stop negative play in future World Cup finals would be to change the points system to three for a win, none for a draw. Teams would have to play for a win at all costs.

After watching such negative soccer at the world's greatest tournament in 1990, I believe the same problems will again arise in '94 if nothing is done to change the system.

— CHRIS LIMNIOS, Glendale, California, USA.

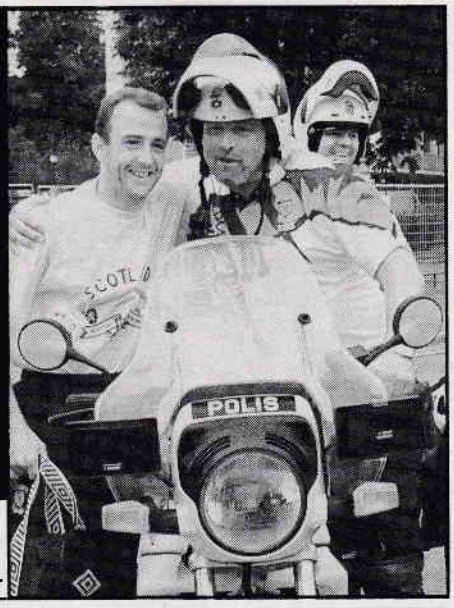
Great Scots!

SIR — I think UEFA's best decision of the year was giving a special Fair Play award to Scotland's fans at the European Championship.

I'm English but i have to admit that the Tartan Army did the reputation of Scottish football proud.

They enjoyed the event — despite Scotland's results — without ever stepping out of line. Well done!

— R.M. CRABTREE, Cotham, Bristol, England.



Scotland's Gary McAllister with a Swedish policeman, wearing a Scotland shirt, at the European Championship.

New rule is delightful

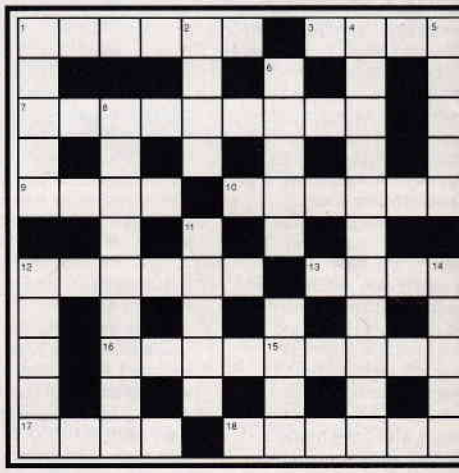
SIR — Those wondering what effects the new FIFA back-pass rule will have might be interested to hear that the Canadian Soccer League has already started using it. The result has been fast, highly-entertaining soccer, without a hint of time-wasting or negative play.

Fears that defenders would resort to repeatedly booting the ball into touch appear unfounded. Instead, team-mates fall back or go wide in support, and the defenders are able to pass their way out of trouble, often switching play nicely in the process. If Canadian players are able to show such composure under pressure, their European counterparts can do the same.

— ALAN DOUGLAS, Vancouver, Canada.

WORLD SOCCE R CROSSWORD

COMPILED BY
Christine Ansell



Clues Across

1. Berlin side which finished bottom of the 1990-91 Bundesliga (6)
3. Sheffield Wednesday's club nickname (4)
7. Toto' of Juventus and Italy (9)
9. Stuttgart Kickers' midfield Czech captured from Banik Ostrava (4)
10. 28-year-old Brazilian forward of Flamengo and Vasco fame (6)
12. Bratislava club — E.C.W. Cup winners in 1969 (6)
13. Ukrainian city boasting the 100,000 capacity Republican stadium (4)
16. Swedish midfield veteran of Atalanta's recent Serie A campaigns (9)
17. 60s Liverpool goalscorer in England's 1966 World Cup side (4)
18. Marc — KV Mechelen's Belgian international midfield star (6)

Clues Down

1. Midfield Czech in Strasbourg's 1991 promotion play-offs side (5)
2. Siggie, coach who led Iceland's 1988 European Championship campaign (4)
4. Former N. Ireland forward — youngest-ever World Cup finals participant (9)
5. Sarajevo-born Yugoslavian forward with Torino from 1989-90 (5)
6. National side coached b Terry Yorath (5)
8. Norwegian defender relegated with 1 across last season (9)
11. African city, home of the Ahly and Zamalek clubs (5)
12. Manager of 1991 Copa America hosts, Chile (5)
14. Germany's national tea coach (5)
15. Cameroon forward, Francois . . . . Biyik (4)

JULY SOLUTION
Across: 1. Cantona; 7. Diego 8. Lahti 9. McMahon 10. Karlsruhe 15. Lacatus 1 India; 19. Tapie; 20. Kennedy
Down: 1. Colak; 2. Nehoda 3. Osim 4. Ademir 5. Weah 6. Horne 11. Lattek 12. Hoddle 14. Italy 16. Caps 17. Sion

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Penpals

FOOTBALL fans, please write, esp. from Europe, S. Africa, S. America and Israel.
— Emeka Egbo, PO Box 12494 Ikeja, Lagos, Nigeria.

PENPALS wanted in Denmark (Brondby), Holland (PSV) and Italy (Juventus).
— Vinod Pullan (16), 9 Dibble Road, Smethwick, Warley, W. Midlands, England.

GHANAIAN fans seek penpals. Male (19, Liverpool, Frankfurt, Marseille), female (27, Real Madrid, Anderlecht, Juventus).
— Edwin Bruce and Ivy Moses, PO Box 223, Cape Coast, Ghana.

STUDENT, 16, fan of Barcelona, Liverpool and Man. United, seeks m/f penfriends.
— Abdulai Bawah, PO Box 1283, Sunyani B/A, Ghana.

FANS of European soccer wanted as penfriends.
— Mohammed Nurudeen Robson, c/o PO Box 150, Korle-Bu, Accra, Ghana.

FOOTBALL fan, 15, seeks penfriends. Please send a photo.
— Maria Renate Olsen, Postboks 34, 8856 Hestoysund, Norway.

FEYENOORD supporter would like to correspond with fans of Chelsea, Rangers and Linfield.
— Milco Doorn, Dorotselaan 8C, 3073 6A, Rotterdam.

MILAN, Rangers, Liverpool, Shelbourne and Glentoran are my favourite clubs. Other fans, please write.
— Joe Anto (18), PO Box 172, Sunyani, Ghana.

MALE, 26, Rangers fan, would like to hear from followers of Schalke 04, Kaiserslautern, Ajax, Barcelona and Eastern European teams.
— Robert Bryden, 8 Drumbottle Road, Balornock, Glasgow.

MEXICAN soccer fan seeks penpals, writing English or Spanish.
— Juan Carlos Barrios, Gardenias 23 ZP 52040, Izcalli Cuauntemoc 1, Metepec, Mexico.

MAN. UNITED fan wants to correspond with fans of any club in the recent season's UEFA Cup.
— M. Spencer, 19 Kingsgate Road, Woodhouse Park, Wythenshaw, Manchester.

STUDENT, 19, aspiring pro footballer, seeks penpals keen on German, Italian and English soccer.
— James Amenyah, PO Box 7466, Accra North, Ghana.

CSKA fan, 20, seeks worldwide penpals.
— Vladimir Unin, F57 h4, Molodeznay St., Moscow region, Balashikhinskiy district, 143992, Russia.

ATLETICO MADRID supporter, 24, would like to write to soccer fans all over Europe, in English, Spanish, French or Italian.
— Frank Banobre, c/Bergondo 6-1oC, 15009 La Coruna, Spain.

EVERTON and England supporter, 28, seeks contact with female fans. All letters answered.
— Edmund Khoo, 10 Jalan Jelita, District 1027, Singapore.

SEND photo to student, 18, who wants to contact female soccer fans.
— Jose Guillermo Torres, Calle St. Catarina 6241, Col. Topochico 64260, Monterrey N.L. Mexico.

I'M 17 and seeking contact with football fans, m/f, anywhere.
—Yu-Kit Fung, 2003 Wing Wah House, Sun Tin Wai Est., Shatin, Hong Kong.

NORWICH and Aris Salonika fan, 15, would like penpals.
—Tony Sidropoulos, 6 Kerdilion St., GR-54627, Thessaloniki, Greece.

QPR fans please write.
Piotr Paterak, 39-300 Mielec, ul. Kusocinskiego 13/64, Poland.

ENGLISH 16-year-old male seeks penpals m/f in North America, and non-league fans in UK/Europe.
—Alex Hickey, 7 Appledore Road, Woodchurch, Ashford, Kent, England.

Wanted

VIDEOS of World Cup matches: Italy v Brazil 82, France v Brazil 86, West Germany v Italy 70.
— David Scapin, 325 Paisley Road, Guelph, Ontario, NIH 2RI, Canada.

INFO on Dutch players, especially Van Basten. Write in English please.
— Joanne Stobbs, 11 Towngate Road, Healey, Batley, W. Yorks WF17 7HS, England.

WORLD SOCCER August 90, May and August 91. — Ahmed Mohmed, PO Box 8941, 122060, State of Kuwait.

for Sale

ROMANIAN match videos, pennants, programmes, badges etc.
— Teodor Cretoi, Str. Vulturului, Bl. 8, Ap. 13, Predeal, Romania.

SCARVES, posters, programmes, tickets etc. for sale or exchange.
— Gabi Oprea, Str. Rafinori 7A, Poleisti Sud, Romania.

MANY soccer items for sale (tickets, badges etc).
— Teo Som, Str. Rodica 2, Ap. 38, Ploiesti 2000, Romania.

Exchanges

EUROPEAN postcards, photos and tickets.
— Davide Mombini, Via Bava 39 B15, 10124 Torino, Italy.

INFORMATION about English and Finnish soccer available, to exchange for details of other countries.
— Patric Hollmberg, 21600 Pargas, Kyrkang, Finland.

FOOTBALL badges wanted for exchange.
— Anatolij Babin, Vasilija Porika Str. 17-6, flat 79, 254208 Kiev 208, Ukraine.

DIE-HARD football fan wants to exchange West African badges etc. for those of other clubs worldwide.
— Frank Dada, Young Clubs Ass., PO Box 825, Sunyani B/A, Ghana.

PENNANTS, tickets and scarves wanted to exchange with British friends.
— Fabio de Giorgi, Oude Heide Str. 51, 3500 Hasselt, Belgium.

LAPEL badges and other souvenirs for exchange worldwide. Write in English, French, Italian or Spanish.
— Raul Franco, CC 3515, CP 1000, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

COLLECTOR of soccer souvenirs seeks exchanges worldwide. Write in English or French.
— Alexandr Sharapov, F31 6A h6, Staro-Fykovskiy pas, Moscow 125167.

PENNANTS of clubs in Africa and Asia wanted in exchange for South American.
— Dario Luque Neira, Rio Negro 651 F. Aguilar Observatorio, 5010 Cordoba, Argentina.

TWO Panathinaikos fans want to exchange souvenirs with all soccer fans.
— Apostolis Petropoulos and Digeni Akrita, 13 Aigaleo, Athens 12244, Greece.

WORLDWIDE QUIZ

JULY'S WORLDWIDE quiz produced the usual healthy crop of entries and was won by **STEVE GIBBS** of Northampton. A year's subscription to *WORLD SOCCER* plus a binder and an exclusive, limited edition *WORLD SOCCER* tee-shirt are on their way.

Here are this month's questions:

1. Claudio Ibrahim Vaz Leal is better known by which other name?

2. What is the link between Stanley Matthews, Bobby Charlton and Kevin Keegan?

3. Which club won their country's Premier League title in 1991 by winning 14 games, drawing the other four, and not conceding a single goal?

4. Where is the Ta'Qali National Stadium?

5. Jim Conway (below) was the odd man out in the 1975 FA Cup Final. Why?

6. Name the former Everton player who helped a club in his native country to a League-Cup double last year?

7. Which former European Footballer of the Year now manages a club in Greece?

8. Who scored six goals for Juventus when they beat Internazionale 9-1 in 1961?

9. "They have nothing to teach us about football," said Norwegian captain Rune Bratseth after a tournament late last year. Who were "they"?

10. Which South American club's badge features an Indian chieftan's head?

11. Bayern Munich lost 6-2 in last season's UEFA Cup . . . to which club?

12. No. 5090 Explorer Drive, Mississauga is which club's address?

13. An Italian flag on an Italian club's shirt indicates . . . what?

14. When was the last occasion England lost a full international after being two goals ahead?

15. Name the footballer of the 40s and 50s who achieved an unusual degree of fame by appearing in the "team group" on the cover of the Sergeant Pepper LP by The Beatles?

16. What is the link between Dublin, Liverpool, Stuttgart, London and Cagliari?

17. Apart from Brazil in 1950, which World Cup tournament produced the highest average attendance per match?

18. Who scored three goals in his 36th international appearance, in 1990, thereby doubling the number he had scored in the other 35?

19. Joszef Venglos (left), once manager of Aston Villa, is now with another club. Which one?

20. Who was the first, and only, player to win the Spanish Cup with Real Madrid, Atletico Madrid and Barcelona?

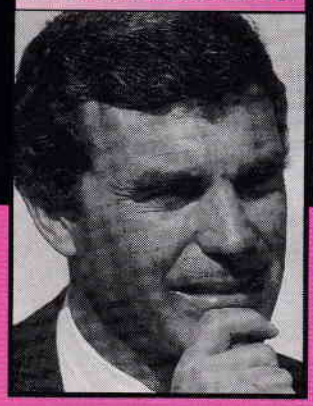
Send your entries on a postcard or back of an envelope to: WORLDWIDE QUIZ (AUGUST), *WORLD SOCCER*, 25th Floor, King's Reach Tower, Stamford Street, London, SE1 9LS, to arrive by August 20th.

To put you out of your misery, here are last month's answers:

1 .... Manchester United: Schmeichel (Denmark), Kanchelskis (CIS), Webb (England and McClair (Scotland).
2 .... Jacob Mofokeng.
3 .... They both graduated from the FA's School of Excellence, at 16, and immediately signed for Auxerre in France.
4 .... Logrones of Spain.
5 .... The Guinness Challenge Cup, played in Canada.
6 .... Nacional of Colombia.
7 .... Geoff Strong in 1965.
8 .... 30 — both sides used four substitutes.
9 .... Mali.
10 .. Christoph Daum.
11 .. Andrei Kanchelskis. He signed for Manchester United but played his first game at Old Trafford for the Soviet Union against Argentina.
12 .. They all play their home matches in Olympic stadiums.
13 .. Bulgaria.
14 .. In September 1980, 3-1 against Turkey in Izmir.
15 .. 10 Italian League titles.
16 .. San Francisco Bay Blackhawks.
17 .. Stockholm.
18 .. Nagoya.
19 .. FC Porto.
20 .. Willie Miller.

COMPILED BY **JOHN KELLY**

TREVOR**BROOKING**



Celebrating . . . Arsenal's Merson, Campbell and Wright savour yet another goal.

Arsenal the tip for top place

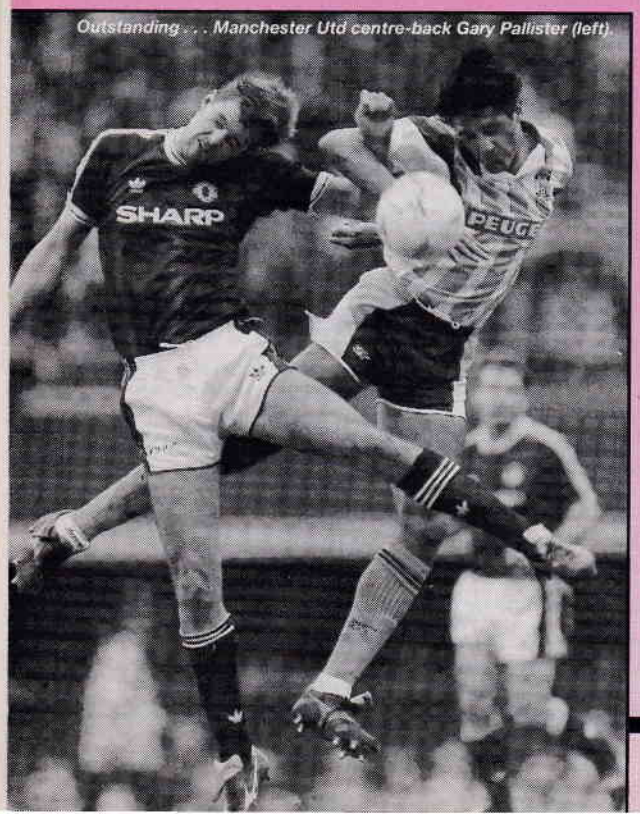
AUGUST signals the official arrival of the new Premier League but although the name has changed, the season ahead won't seem that much different from what went before.

There are still 22 clubs, and despite the disappointment of England's performance in the European Championship, the incessant flow of fixtures continues unabated.

I returned from Sweden somewhat apprehensive about how our own game is going to produce the skilful attacking players we need at international level. I will watch with renewed interest as the title challenge unfolds, and hopefully clubs who place the emphasis on flair can be rewarded with the success that deserves.

Leeds showed resilience to edge ahead of Manchester United last season, and this pair are bound to be back in contention this time too. The other realistic challengers are Arsenal and Liverpool, and I feel sure the winners of the first Premier League will come from this quartet.

They have the most comprehensive squads and are capable of handling the injuries and fluctuations in form that are bound to beset players.



Outstanding . . . Manchester Utd centre-back Gary Pallister (left).

My order of preference is Arsenal, Manchester United, Leeds and Liverpool, although this does not allow for transfer activity likely in the near future.

Arsenal will not have the distraction of the Champions' Cup, and surely cannot begin as badly as they did last season. They conceded numerous "soft" goals which were uncharacteristic for them, and it was not until their FA Cup defeat at Wrexham in January that they jolted themselves into the consistency usually associated with their play.

Potential

The scoring potential of Paul Merson, Ian Wright, Alan Smith, Kevin Campbell and Anders Limpar makes them the most potent of all, and the arrival of Denmark's John Jensen will stiffen the midfield.

Alex Ferguson and Manchester United must still be trying to overcome the disappointment of missing out last season. In March the Championship seemed to be there for the taking. But scoring became a problem and the home results on a dreadful Old Trafford surface cost them dearest of all.Peter Schmeichel and Gary Pallister were outstanding throughout and the main foundation for their solid defensive displays, although Park Parker's versatility was missed in the closing weeks. That improved tightness at the back should remain, and if they can build on the wonderful talent of Ryan Giggs they will again go close.

Howard Wilkinson has added Scott Sellars to his buoyant Leeds squad, but it is never easy to win championships in successive seasons. The midfield department is as exciting as any in the country.

Leeds probably need to add an extra defender. Late on, when they surged towards the title, they were at full stretch and forced to play Gary Speed at full-back on a few occasions.

Liverpool won the FA Cup and had a good run in the UEFA Cup, but their League form was always indifferent, and they never threatened to make a realistic challenge.

Their scoring record away from Anfield was abysmal, and unless they can remedy this they appear to lack the goal potential necessary to overhaul their rivals.

Liverpool, however, provided two of the brightest new players to emerge last season, Steve McManaman and Rob Jones. Both have a great chance to force their way into the England side over the next few months.

Sheffield Wednesday must be considered after a superb third-place finish in their first season since gaining promotion. They have the Leeds example to follow, and Trevor Francis now has Chris Waddle to strengthen his campaign.

Manchester City and Aston Villa will be looking to sustain their progress, but currently lack sufficient depth in their squads to cope with the almost inevitable injuries.

Spurs, Everton and Nottingham Forest offer a less promising indication that they can maintain the required consistency for 42 matches, and so Cup competitions may be a more hopeful alternative.

Partnership

Spurs are without Gary Lineker and have the new management partnership of Ray Clemence and Doug Livermore now in charge. They have used the surplus from Paul Gascoigne's sale to add several new faces to the squad, and I am looking forward to seeing how Darren Anderton adjusts after his move from Portsmouth.

Forest without Des Walker will take some getting used to, and I feel they will find him irreplaceable. In midfield Roy Keane's all-round ability continues to impress as much as anyone.

Everton, whose attack seemed to flounder so badly. will be without the reliable Martin Keown in defence early on through injury, and their fortunes are unlikely to improve.

The remaining clubs face a priority to stay in the Premier League with Cup success the additional bonus for all.

Whatever the outcome, good luck to all clubs who try to entertain, as well as win!

The KEIR RADNEDGE COMMENTARY

New name, same game

FROM the column inches devoted to the creation of the Premier League, you would think a radical change is about to burst upon our pitches.

No way.

The only major changes this season will be brought about by the International Board's banning of the back-pass. As far as the fan on the terrace is concerned, the Premier League is merely the old First Division with a different name: same clubs, same managers, same players.

Equally, the same frenetic football.

England's crowded World Cup qualifying programme means no progress can be made to improve the base from which England manager Graham Taylor (below) must operate. English players will continue to work under extreme physical pressure with no time to develop their technique or their tactical thinking. On that

basis at least, one can understand Taylor's much-ridiculed suggestion that the pragmatic approach is the only way forward.

He suggests (if I understood his Euro '92 post-mortem) that the England team can be only a mirror of the domestic game rather than an improvement on it.

Such a pity the opportunity to reduce the top division (whatever its name) to 18 clubs has gone by the board.

Africa must learn a French lesson

Morocco have only themselves to blame for losing World Cup vote

Morocco method . . . Mouloud Moudakkar in action against Cameroon.

HARD to say which end of the decision on the 1998 World Cup was more important: the award to France or the rejection of Morocco.

FIFA's executive committee voted 12-7 in favour of France, who always had been runaway favourites. Had Herman Neuberger, the German vice-president of FIFA not been kept at home by illness, then the French would have had another vote. And there is little doubt that, while president Joao Havelange diplomatically did not vote, he cast his influential smile upon France.

In terms of technology and infrastructure the result was never in doubt. FIFA's responsibility is to pick the best candidate: France was just that. Not that crude reality did anything to assuage African fury. But the truth is, Morocco made a string of mistakes and misjudgments in the tenor of their campaign.

In the bitter aftermath, Moroccan and African officials threw insults in all directions. Most were aimed, ironically, at Havelange, who has done more than any other man in the world game to encourage African football.

What I fear is that the naive arrogance displayed in the Moroccan bid will carry over into the aftermath and will prevent Morocco and Africa in general from admitting they made mistakes and, more important, putting them right.

World Cup bidders should:

- NOT allow a politician to front their campaign.
- NOT use spurious, negative arguments.
- NOT ignore the general world perspective of Africa.
- NOT present FIFA's inspection team with utterly inadequate facilities.
- NOT threaten FIFA.

Also, they should not keep Havelange waiting. But I'll come to that in due course.

Morocco's campaign was led by Abdellatif Semali, the Minister for Sport. He may be a most adept domestic politician. But he was badly briefed in the ways and wiles of football politics.

He was naive in the extreme to base Morocco's claim on "the wrong done to Africa by keeping the World Cup exclusively within Europe and the Americas."

Past venue decisions have been made on a comparison of candidate facilities and political and financial will within competing nations. The fact is that Africa does not have ONE country which could compete, in terms of basic current facilities and

Three cheers for Lancaster Gate

THE Football Association generally come in for more jeers than cheers in the media. So I am delighted to be able to give Sir Bert Millichip, Graham Kelly and Co. a well-deserved pat on the back on behalf of all *WORLD SOCCER* readers.

To appreciate just what the FA have done, you need a little technical background regarding television rules and regulations. Soccer can be beamed into another country only when the receiving country's federation do not object. An FA can object only when top domestic football is scheduled for the same day.

The prime competition in England is, of course, the FA-backed Premier League whose matches will be staged on Saturdays plus one live on Sunday afternoon and one live on Monday evening, in return for Sky TV's £304 million.

It would have been quite understandable if, when Channel 4 secured the rights to live Italian soccer on Sunday afternoons, the FA said No. They would have been within their rights.

FA spokesman David Bloomfield told me: "Because we are one of the biggest exporters of televised football we thought we had to be seen to be even-handed."

He would not speculate on whether any of the Premier League clubs would object to one further obstacle in their bids to capitalise on the financial value of their product.

Not only must the Premier League persuade armchair fans to buy a satellite dish then pay the extra subscription fee, they must do so in the knowledge that "free" Italian football is running the same Sunday afternoon on Channel 4 (never mind ITV's plans to screen Football League games simultaneously).

For fans of international football, the FA's attitude is to be applauded. Not merely for clearing the way for Channel 4 but for opening up domestic television to more foreign football.

Screensport make no secret of their desire to screen Spanish League action live on a Saturday night. Now the FA, with their even-handed approach, cannot object. Let the cameras roll!

Italian intensity . . . Serie A will be coming to Channel 4 this season.

necessary technology, with any two dozen countries in Europe and America.

The sooner African football politicians — and their media — understand that, the sooner they will be able to mount a sensible campaign.

Their base argument should not stem from envy, jealousy and that infuriating chip-on-the-shoulder mentality which will hold Africa back and let Asia to claim the leadership in soccer's Third World

Briefing

The claim to stage a World Cup should pick up, as the Moroccans barely tried, on FIFA's reasoning for going to the United States in 1994: the importance of developing the domestic game. That is the best argument Africa has. Yet, in the media briefing I attended just a week before FIFA's World Cup vote, it was produced more or less as an afterthought by the Moroccan delegation at the European Championship.

African football is widely misunderstood from abroad. Morocca and Tunisia are considered at one with Cameroon and Nigeria.

Absolutely wrong.

The North African nations of the Mahgreb (Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt) consider themselves more closely linked to their Arab cousins in the Middle East than to the southern nations of Black Africa.

Anyone with much experience of attending the African Nations' Cup finals will have seen and heard enough evidence of the racial rivalries to appreciate that.

But the Africa which the rest of the world knows best from its television screens is the Africa of starving millions. The question any African World Cup bidder must confront head-on is this one: *When Africa needs so much humanitarian investment, why should it squander millions staging football?*

I put that question to Semlali. He had asked for it by stating earlier that "our continent has all the immense resources needed to stage such events as the World Cup." (Note that he said: "Our continent." He was projecting Morocco as representative of all Africa).

I asked: "If your continent have such vast resources, could they not be put to a better humanitarian use than staging a sports event?"

Semali was not amused. He said: "I do not understand your argument." But it was not an argument, merely a simple question. The Pan-African mask had shrunk. Suddenly the real limits of his concern were revealed as the borders of his own country.

To be fair, one other member of the Moroccan delegation did try to repair the damage by emphasising the industrial and social gains all of North Africa might make from a World Cup award. Unfortunately this too was delivered as little more than an afterthought.

African sportsmen may rage as much as they like about the sporting context of the World Cup; the rest of the world will not sanction an African host without evidence that its award can help address far, far more important issues in that continent.

Any future African claimant must also demonstrate serious progress in domestic sporting infrastructures. Morocco, as one anonymous FIFA inspector said: "Showed us two stadia and nine holes in the ground."

Starting

The Moroccan dossier envisaged 12 World Cup centres. Only Casablanca (80,000), Rabat (60,000) and Oudja (35,000) have basic stadia facilities in place.

In terms of telephone facilities and domestic transport, Morocco has a long way to go to reach World Cup standards. Their will is enormous, but they are starting from a long way back by comparison with Europe and the Americas. Until they understand and address and win that argument they cannot expect to win the vote.

Nor will they make progress with veiled threats about how soccer's Third World would rise up if the vote does not go their way. Men such as Havelange, Guillermo Canedo, Neuberger and the rest do not appreciate threats. Such hot-headed, childish nonsense can only harm the African cause.

Kept waiting . . . King Hussan (left) treated Havelange badly.

The final nail in Morocco's coffin was provided by the very King Hussan whose power and wealth had underwritten their campaign.

King Hussan is notorious for keeping guests waiting — as the Queen and as King Juan Carlos of Spain have found out to their thumb-twiddling cost. So it was no surprise that King Hussan duly kept Havelange waiting when he paid a visit.

Havelange, like him or not, represents football royalty. He is sovereign over not one country but 178.

Being kept waiting was a new experience and one he did not relish. After two hours he grew fed up and left. One might surmise that Morocco's World Cup prospects left with him.

In short, Morocco had a difficult case and did little to make the best of it. But the sympathy and encouragement of the world game towards Africa was evident in a vote which did not disgrace them.

Morocco or one of their neighbours should try again for 2002. Just because the Japanese are making all the early running means nothing. The election of the 2002 hosts will be the most open of all. Japan appear to be trying almost too hard, too soon. Until very late in the day, it seems, Europe's votes could go either way.

But can Africa learn from their mistakes? Or will Africa's football politicians maintain the blind arrogance which harms only their own cause? Watch this space.

Footnotes to history

THE National Soccer Hall of Fame Week in Oneonta, New York, raised some intriguing doubts about World Cup statistics in *WORLD SOCCER* colleague Colin Jose's mind.

American veterans, for instance, told him that Bert Patenaude scored all three goals against Paraguay in the first round in 1930. Conventional wisdom gives Patenaude the first and third goals and ascribes No. 2 to an own goal. This rewrites history.

So Patenaude was the first man to score a World Cup hat-trick, because the match was played on July 17, 1930, two days before Guillermo Stabile's three for Argentina against Mexico.

Also, if Aurelio Gonzalez is eliminated as scorer of the first own goal, the dubious honour now belongs to Ernst Lortscher of Switzerland, in his team's 4-2 win over Germany in 1938.

More rewriting of history may be necessary for 1950. Again, American veterans insist that Gino Pariani and not John Souza scored for the US against Spain, and that the two goals against Chile were scored by Joe Maca and Frank Wallace, and not by Pariani and Souza.

Still counting . . .

LAST month I reported that English clubs would have to count Scottish, Welsh and Irish players as foreigners this season. That provoked some shaking of heads at Premier League level. One meeting of Premier officials had been told: "This doesn't apply to us."

Wrong. It applies to everyone. As a UEFA spokesman told me: "Without reservation."

To remind you: professional clubs throughout Europe may line up a MAXIMUM of three foreign-qualified players plus two foreign-qualified "assimilated" players (those who have played an uninterrupted five years in the country including three years at youth i.e. under-19 level).

This rule was brought in, after negotiation with the European Commission. But UEFA's extraordinary congress in Montreux last year decided to extend the regulation to cover all UEFA's members — even those not in the European Community.

Doubles your money

TENNIS players earn huge amounts for winning Grand Slam tournaments. But even the Couriers and Agassis would not have matched the combined value of a doubles partnership in Italy. The annual summer footballers' tennis event paired £12 million Gianluca Vialli with £13 million Gianluigi Lentini. Sadly, huge crowds prevented the players from getting on court.

Kept off court . . . Gianluca Vialli (left) and Gianluigi Lentini.

Santana's title at last

TELE SANTANA, who took Brazil close to winning the World Cup in 1982 and again in 1986, gained his first major honour as a coach by helping Brazil's Sao Paulo FC to Libertadores Cup victory for the first time . . . reluctantly.

Santana . . . success at last

Sao Paulo skipper Rai (left) attacks the Newell's defence during the Libertadores Cup Final.

At least that is what it looked like at the start of the 33rd Libertadores Cup, when Santana was quoted as saying that it was a sordid tournament steeped in doping and bribing of referees, decided more off the field than on.

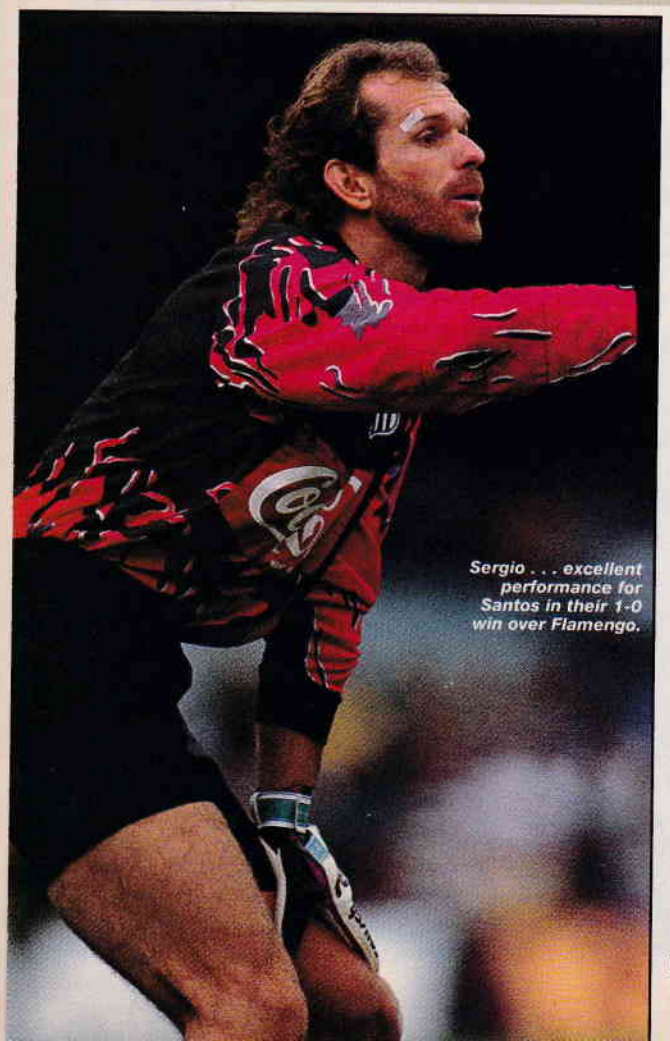
Santana lined up many reserves in the first match, to rest first-teamers for what was, for him, the more important Brazilian national championship. Sao Paulo lost 3-0 to compatriots Criciuma, a Second Division team who had qualified for the tournament by winning the less important Brazilian knock-out cup.

But Sao Paulo did not lose another group game and easily qualified for the second round behind Criciuma. Although having a hard time getting through the third round (against Criciuma) they did not lose a second match until the semi-finals (after a run of 10 unbeaten games).

By then Santana had changed his mind. Sao Paulo, the defending national champions, only barely qualified for the second stage of their domestic competition, by one point, and even fielde reserves in their first mat of the second stage, to re players for the Libertador Cup!

Under Santana, a great disciple of old-style Brazilian soccer, Sao Pau played an attacking style the way, even when it might have been wiser to defend.

In the final, Sao Paulo m another team well known for good soccer — Newell Old Boys of Argentina, wh scorn the usual defensive styles and spoiling tactics for which this competition has become so notorious.


Sergio . . . excellent performance for Santos in their 1-0 win over Flamengo.

White goods, black marks

Refs face a spell in the fridge

IT'S time for Brazilian Federation president Ricardo Teixeira to nip down to his local electricity store and buy a few refrigerators.

One of the quainter Brazilian football expressions is the one used to describe the fate of referees who are not up to scratch: they are "put in the fridge" (i.e. suspended). And judging by recent performances. Teixeira is going to need plenty of cold storage space.

The semi-finals of the Brazilian championship have been marred by some dreadful refereeing displays. Non-existent offsides, failure to book players for the most cynical of fouls and a general state of unfitness and flabbiness have made it a black year for the men in black.

Claudio Cerdeira's performance in the Flamengo-Vasco da Gama derby was unanimously declared "terrible" by the Brazilian press. Cerdeira watched passively as the players hacked each other, failed to show a single yellow card after a brawl which involved half the men on the pitch, and allowed Vasco striker Bebeto to hit his marker, Junior Baiano, on the neck without so much as a warning.

In the end, Cerdeira plucked up the courage to show five yellow cards, but it was a feeble response to a display of anti-football which deserved at least half a dozen reds.

Perhaps it's a little unfair to single out Cerdeira. But then his performance was unfair on the 101,000 people who paid hard-earned cruzeiros to watch 22 grown men fight and spit instead of playing football.

Cerdeira was by no means the only guilty part In a bizarre incident a wee earlier, two linesmen from Santa Catarina state in southern Brazil missed the Santos-Flamengo game in Sao Paulo because their flight was delayed.

They were replaced by a pair from Sao Paulo — 50 kilometres from Santos — much to Flamengo's fury. To complicate matters still further the replacement pair hindered both sides, breaking up their best attacks with some extraordinary offside decisions. The original pair were later banned for a year.

Not even Jose Roberto Wright, voted the best in

Yet there was a lack of goals, each team winning 1-0 at home.

Newell's played below their usual form, their win was the result of a dubious penalty, and their young coach, Marcelo Bielsa, conceded that San Paulo were the better team. Yet it was a pity the contest had to be decided by penalties.

In addition to Brazilian national team captain Rai, Sao Paulo's stars are winger Elivelton, former Torino striker Muller, and defender Antonio Carlos.

Colo Colo, the Chilean defending champions who refused their bye into the second round for financial reasons, went out to Ecuador's Barcelona at that stage, but it was one of those unsavoury clashes which bedevil this tournament.

The first leg in Santiago was rough, but that hardly justified what happened later. The Chilean players were attacked when they arrived at Guayaquil airport for the return leg, and when leaving their bus at the hotel. They were unable to go for training, and the hostile atmosphere contributed to Colo Colo's elimination on a 2-1 aggregate.

After the match the party had to stay locked in their changing room until it was safe to leave the stadium.

Sao Paulo have taken part in the Libertadores Cup on six occasions, but this was their first win — the sixth for a Brazilian team. Argentine clubs are still the leading winners with 15 successes (but not since 1986), followed by Uruguay 8, Brazil 6, Paraguay 2 and Colombia and Chile, one each.

ERIC WEIL

Cup after Cup after Cup

ANOTHER new invention by the South American Football Confederation (CONMEBOL), the Masters Cup, was played for the first time in Buenos Aires.

This was for the four winners (so far) of the Super Cup which, in turn, is for winners of the Libertadores Cup.

Boca Juniors (Argentina) won the tournament (see Classified Results) against Racing Club (Argentina), Cruzeiro (Brazil) and Olimpia (Paraguay). Watch out for a trophy for Masters Cup winners!

Meanwhile CONMEBOL were making the draw for the CONMEBOL Cup, on the lines of the UEFA Cup, for leading clubs not qualifying for the Libertadores Cup. CONMEBOL now run seven international cup tournaments.

Where will it end?

Latorre . . . joint top scorer on nine goals before an injury ruled him out.

Velez go to the top

NEWELL'S Old Boys ended a 27-game unbeaten run — 13 in Libertadores Cup midweek games and 14 in defence of their Argentine national title — when they fielded a complete reserve team away to Estudiantes de La Plata and lost 1-0.

The club had not fielded reserves in League matches while battling to the Libertadores Cup final, going against the general custom, but they did it this time on the eve of the first leg of the final against Sao Paulo FC.

Their next League game, three days before the second leg, was postponed, but with only three games to go in the second round of the national championship, Velez Sarsfield had gone to the top.

They had won their last seven games at press time, while Newell's were a point behind with a game in hand.

Boca Juniors, also one point adrift, lost Fiorentina-found Diego Latorre through injury with four games to go.

He had been a key man in midfield, and was joint top League scorer with Dario Scotto (Platense) on nine goals.

But Boca had some good news, too.

Diego Maradona, a great Boca fan, bought Brazilian international striker Charles from Cruzeiro for two million dollars and was loaning him free of charge to Boca Juniors.

Maradona also hoped to play for the club after the end of his drug suspension and if Napoli released him from his contract.

the world in 1990, has been immune, disallowing a Corinthians goal against Cruzeiro for offside when TV showed Paulo Sergio, the scorer, a good yard onside at the time.

Apart from the incidents, there has been a general leniency on the part of referees, who have failed to show yellow cards for offences such as time-wasting, not retreating at free-kicks, kicking the ball away after the whistle has gone, etc.

The referees are victims of a system which fails to back them up when they take a stand, and are subject to pressures from the directors who persistently try to veto officials they do not like.

Referees apart, the semi-finals of the Brazilian championship were a bit like stepping into a time capsule. At the halfway stage of the semi-finals, Santos and Botafogo, the clubs who dominated the 1960s and early 1970s, led the respective groups.

Just in case you don't remember, eight teams qualified for the semi-finals of this year's championship.

They were divided into two groups of four and then played twice against the teams in the SAME group. The top team in each group qualify for the final.

Santos had started the semi-finals as underdogs, having sneaked into the top eight at the end of the first phase to dislodge Internacional, who had been there all along.

The semi-finals began with a 3-3 draw away to Vasco da Gama, Paulinho, and Bebeto scoring three each.

In their next game, Santos beat Flamengo 1-0 with an early goal by Guga, then survived a second-half battering, thanks to goalkeeper Sergio.

Their next achievement was to draw 1-1 with South American champions Sao Paulo despite playing much of the second half with nine men after Axel and Luis Carlos were sent off on one of the rare occasions where a referee decided to show some authority.

A diving header by winger Almir in the second minute of injury time gave Santos a draw after Ivan had opened the scoring.

That put Santos on top of the group with four points, one ahead of Vasco and Flamengo, who drew 1-1 in their battle at the Maracana.

Sao Paulo, clearly worn out by their efforts in the Libertadores Cup, were last with two points. They fielded a reserve side against Flamengo when they lost 1-0.

Botafogo led at halfway in the other group, taking five points out of a possible six. But it was not all plain sailing. After beating Corinthians 1-0, they were involved in a massive brawl which needed intervention from riot police. The fight began with Viola punching Botafogo's Pino: substitute Andrew then left the bench to settle the score with Viola.

After that all hell let loose, with players punching and kicking each other. Once again, firmer refereeing would have avoided the problem.

BRIAN HOMEWOOD

Leon keep on rising

LEON, who returned to the First Division only two seasons ago, won the 1991-92 championship.

The top two clubs of four sections qualified for the play-offs as well as (for the first time this season) the two best third-placed clubs.

This was Leon's second title in 35 years and their fifth in all. Their previous successes were in seasons 1947-48, 1948-49, 1951-52 and 1955-56.

In the quarter-finals Leon knocked out last year's champions, UNAM, beating them 1-0 in both legs. Puebla ended Necaxa's unbeaten run after 19 games, making them a title favourite.

Leon got through the semi-finals on away goals, against Cruz Azul, and then drew 0-0 in both final legs with Puebla before winning 2-0 in extra time.

Mexico's national coach, Cesar Luis Menotti, picked a 22-man squad for World Cup qualifying games which included five uncapped players, but not the season's League top-scorer, Luis Garcia (UNAM), who had just signed for Atletico Madrid.

Veteran international Hugo Sanchez has signed for Mexico City's America after 11 seasons with Real Madrid.

Another Argentine coach and former international, Pedro Dellacha, has signed for Mexican First Division club Santos.

ERIC WEIL

Maturana goes to America Cali

RUMOURS finally became official when America Cali appointed Francisco "Pacho" Maturana their latest coach.

The whole process has been going on for several months, as had the rumours, of America's interest in Maturana, the former Caldas, Nacional, Colombian national team and Valladolid coach.

His departure from Valladolid earlier in the year made him available but the cat did not finally come out of the bag, semi-officially at least, until Medellin made an abortive aproach. They were rebuffed on the grounds that he already had an agreement with America.

Other offers reportedly came in from San Lorenzo of Argentina plus unspecified clubs in Mexico and Italy but the factors in America's favour (such as the opportunity to return to Colombia with a big club and reasonably familiar personnel) tipped the balance.

The decision still came as something of a surprise, perhaps because Maturana is the man most associated with America's biggest rivals, Nacional from Medellin.

As happened at Nacional in 1987, America will become an all-Colombian side, a stipulation that the club agreed to despite the fact that it means the departure of two of their best players, Jorge Da Silva and Jorge Balbis.

The future of others was also in doubt with Maturana's arrival, notably internationals Eduardo Pimentel, Albeiro Usuriaga, Sergio Angulo and Anthony De Avila. All have fallen foul of their new coach in the past.

At Nacional, Maturana was given a free hand, and was allowed to piece together a winner over three years. He will not have that luxury in Cali.

Diego Umana, America's outgoing coach, moved to an assistant's post — not for lack of results or ability but primarily because Maturana was simply available and willing. Hence America's semi-final shoot-out loss to Newell's Old Boys saved the club a potentially embarrassing situation had they finally won the Libertadores Cup.

The first stage of the championship was dominated by Deportivo Cali, unbeaten in 16 games and with crowds nearing 30,000. Santa Fe, Union Magdalena and Nacional also picked up the available bonus points to go towards the final stages.

Every month brings news of coaches leaving their posts. Nacional's Hernan Dario Gomez quit to take up a full-time appointment as national team coach, starting with the Olympics in Barcelona. His assistant, Luis Fernando Suarez, was his replacement.

Miguel Angel Lopez left Junior Barranquilla after 12 games, to return home to Argentina, while ex-Junior coach Julio Comesana was dismissed at Medellin among accusations that he could not get on with his better players.

All this means that 60 per cent of the coaches starting 1992 did not get to halfway — which probably ranks professional coaching as about as dangerous as catching a bus in downtown Bogota during a power cut.

KEITH **SMITH**

Maturana . . . back home again.

The Great Chain Robbery

TRADITIONAL rivals Nacional and Penarol, drew their Uruguayan First Division classic 0-0 in front of 55,000 fans at the Centenario stadium.

The match will hardly be remembered for good soccer — of which there was none — nor for the five players sent off, but for the Gold Chain Robbery.

In one of the most unusual incidents on a soccer field, Nacional striker Julio Dely Valdez and Penarol's Carlos Sanchez jumped to head the ball, and the latter ripped a gold chain, with a medal, off the former's neck.

Dely Valdez claimed its return, but Sanchez said he did not take it. Later he admitted that he had thrown it away.

After the final whistle Nacional players chased Sanchez off the field and Dely Valdez reported the matter to the police. Then the chain mysteriously turned up, when a Penarol official handed it over to a Nacional official.

Nacional went into the match after seven wins in a row, thanks mainly to Dely Valdez, the First Division's top scorer with seven goals.

Penarol had picked up only five points out of 10 and there was talk that former Red Star Belgrade coach Ljubomir Petrovic would be leaving.

After one defeat angry fans broke into the changing room and attacked several players, and Petrovic offered his resignation, but it was not accepted.

Nacional went close to victory in the match against Penarol, but both sets of fans seemed satisfied — Nacional's because the result left them leading the standings, and Penarol's because their team held out with eight men against nine.

IN VENEZUELA, Caracas FC won their first title after six years in the First Division, and qualify for next year's Libertadores Cup.

So do Minerven, who finished a point behind. Third-placed Maritimo qualify for the new continental CONMEBOL Cup.

German Andreas Vogler, the championship top scorer with 25 goals, was outstanding for Caracas.

IN ECUADOR, Emelec, unbeaten in 13 games, led the First Division by two points over Barcelona and Liga Deportiva Universitaria. The first two had a game in hand, against each other.

Champions Barcelona were the only team to beat Emelec in the first round, but they dropped points when fielding reserves during their Libertadores Cup run.

Barcelona also lost long-serving coach Jorge Haberger, who had to return to Argentina for family reasons. He was replaced by Brazilian Paulo Cesar Carpegiani.

IN PERU, Universitario de Deportes moved to the top, thanks mainly to some outstanding performances by their 32-year-old Chilean Juan Carlos Letelier.

Their great Lima rivals, Alianza, moved away from the bottom after signing two more foreigners — Uruguayan Julio Morales from Boca Juniors (Argentina) and Alejandria Glaria, an Argentine from Universidad Catolica (Chile).

IN BOLIVIA, players of the four Santa Cruz clubs — Oriente Petrolero, Blooming, Destroyers and Real — formed their own union and went on strike.

They had not been paid for three months, and international Victor Antelo had not received his percentage from his transfer to Jorge Wilsterman.

There was a row over results, too. The Santa Cruz teams did not turn up to play and their rivals claim they had won the points, but the FA rescheduled the games.

Bolivar and San Jose, first and second last season, top the table a point ahead of The Strongest, but different standings are being published.

IN PARAGUAY, Sportivo Luqueno topped the First Division by a point after four games.

Olimpia, winners of the season's first tournament (the "Republica") were in second place. Popular Cerro Porteno continued to slump. Since elimination from the Libertadores Cup they had not won a match.

GATES UP, GOALS DOWN

STATISTICS show that attendances at South American matches have shown a notable increase in Argentina, Chile and Colombia, but are down in Brazil and Paraguay.

This is not directly related to goals. Chile has the highest average in South America at the moment, but there are special reasons, while Argentine has the lowest.

Argentine average attendances have steadily fallen in post-war years, but are now above 10,000 for the first time in six seasons. These statistics were taken from earlier rounds of the championship, when interest was not at its height.

This year both Argentina's big clubs — River Plate and Boca Juniors — who have won most titles and have the biggest followings, have been fighting for the title.

There is also a system in the country where club members get in free at their own stadium.

In Colombia, where clubs are more commercial and limited companies, as in Britain, attendances always have been among the highest in South America, and are increasing.

The 1990 average of 12,125 per game increased 25 per cent last year to 15,423, while this year's increase in Chile for the usual pre-season tournament, which involves First and Second Division clubs, is as much as 22 per cent.

In Brazil, soccer is slowly slipping. Motor racing and even volleyball (two sports in which Brazil has had more international success), are now more popular. Soccer gates continue to slide and are 10 per cent down on the same period last year (the national championship).

The same applies to Paraguay, where average attendances for the Championship of the Republic, which includes provincial (non-league) champions, are as low as 900 per game.

Chile has the highest scoring average, 3.23 per match in the Copa Chile, but with Second Division teams taking part there is sometimes a big difference in standards, and a new system being tried out gives bonus points for goals.

Argentina and Uruguay are scoring fewest goals. There is an even standard across the Argentine national championship, and nearly every team adopts defensive tactics.

In Uruguay an abundance of small clubs with no title hopes take the field with the idea that one point is better than none.

Goals per game in seven South American countries are:
Chile 3.23,
Bolivia 2.65,
Ecuador 2.57,
Peru 2.34,
Brazil 2.33,
Argentina and Uruguay 2.00.

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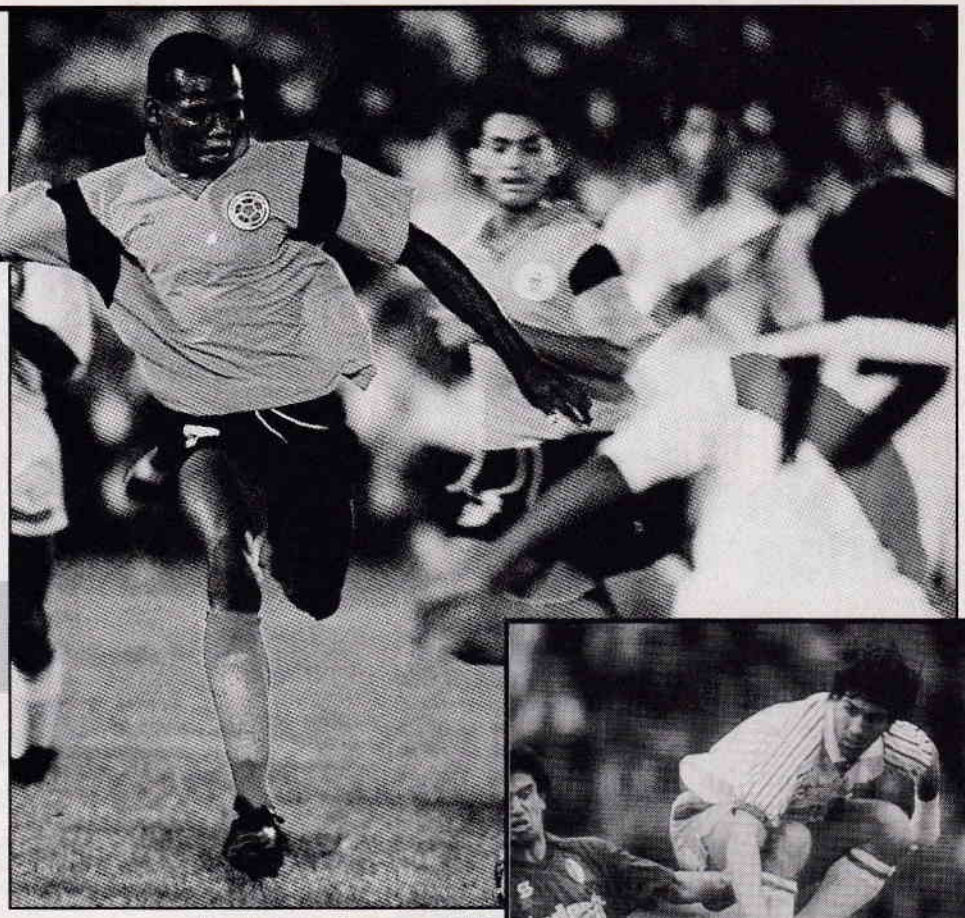


Italy's first Colombian looks the part

COLOMBIANS have rarely adapted to the rigours of European football. The culture shock has often impeded their development.

Yet Parma, the Italian Cup-winners, feel they have unearthed a pearl from South America, and they are not alone.

The Olympic qualifying tournament, held in Paraguay last February, drew officials from many of Europe's top sides, inevitably including a substantial presence from power-hungry Italian clubs and Faustino Asprilla's positive displays guaranteed a transfer to one of Italy's most ambitious teams.

He scored three times, and Colombia were rated the best side by defeating Peru 4-1, Venezuela 4-0, Uruguay 3-0 and Brazil 2-0, in addition to earning draws against Ecuador and Paraguay, before the hosts took top spot with a 1-0 win in their last game.

A tug of war ensued, with Parma victorious in the final pull, and 22-year-old Asprilla packed his bags. The cost was £3 million, and Asprilla received a three-year contract, with an option on a fourth.

Parma's president, Giorgio Pedraneschi, is convinced his new acquisition will live up to his billing. "We're in possession of a champion," he says. Even though a question remains as regards his ability to settle, I believe players are subjected to a similar amount of stress in Colombia."

Electrifying

Atalanta's signing of Asprilla's international striking partner, Ivan Valenciano, at least ensures he will not be forced to fly Colombia's flag alone. Valenciano replaces the Argentine, Claudio Caniggia, who has joined AS Roma.

Caniggia and Asprilla have electrifying pace. The Argentine already has made his mark at the highest level, due in most part to the goals which saw off Italy and Brazil in Italia '90, while the Colombian remains an unknown quantity.

His price tag will perhaps place extra pressure on his young shoulders. Even in a country where transfer fees are enormous, many Italians are expressing concern over such a costly purchase of a relative unknown.

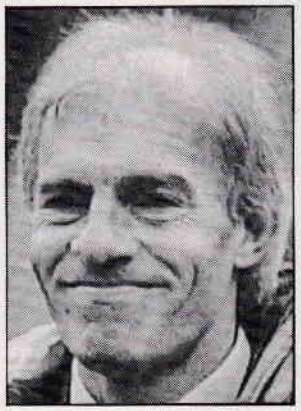
This has not dampened the enthusiasm of Parma's coach, Nevio Scala, who saw Asprilla's first outing on the club's end-of-season excursion to Brazil.

Asprilla did not disappoint. He was instrumental in the defeat of Fluminense in Bahia and scored a typical goal — leaving three defenders in his wake before unleashing an unstoppable shot.

His work rate also impressed, and his contribution to defensive responsibilities was an added bonus.

"Faustino will adapt easily to Parma's system," says Scala.

"His speed will cause our opponents a host of problems. His only real weakness rests in the physical aspect. He needs more muscle, and we've prepared a training programme geared to making him more powerful. I'm looking forward to seeing him play alongside Alessandro Melli and Tomas Brolin."



Making an impact . . . Faustino Asprilla (seen above, playing for Colombia) should form a powerful spearhead with Allesandro Melli (far right) and Tomas Brolin. If so, coach Nevio Scala (right) will be delighted.

Faustino Asprillo was born on November 6, 1969, in Tulua Valle, near Cali in Western Colombia, approximately 300 kilometres from Bogota. His soccer roots sprouted on the street of his neighbourhood at the age of eight.

"When we played on the streets, we improvised," he said.

"We challenged other teams in the area and the matches would sometimes last the entire day!"

His undoubted quality surfaced on representing his school side, and he began to flourish. Despite his promise, Asprilla's parents encouraged their son to continue with his studies, and he says: "It was tiring and difficult, but I believe it would have been a mistake to focus attention only on football.

"My parents made sacrifices in order to finance my studies. We are a family of nine, and gaining a diploma was an obligation. I would have liked to have gone to university, but football ultimately occupied my whole life."

Following his progression through the ranks of his hometown team, Cali, Asprilla was transferred to Nacional of Medellin in 1989, and then became the first Colombian to sign for an Italian club. In recent years, the few who have joined Europe's elite have not fared favourably.

The colourful Carlos Valderrama's proposed moved to Roma in the mid-eighties failed to materialise, hence his move to Montpelier in France, before joining Real Valladolid in Spain. He was accompanied by Jesus Alvarez and the flamboyant 'keeper, Rene Higuita, to a side coached by Francisco Maturana, who guided Colombia to the 1990 World Cup Finals.

All failed, and their shortcomings perhaps explain why the spotlight regularly falls on players from their neighbours, Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay.

Asprilla's new boss recognises the task ahead. "He needs to do a great deal of training with his new team-mates in order to learn and to understand our game quickly," says Scala.

Serving

He won't have much time, but I'm certain he will be ready by August 30, for the Super Cup Final against Milan. It will be a great occasion. Even Franco Baresi will find it difficult to stop him."

On the last occasion Milan faced a Colombian club, they beat Nacional 1-0 for the 1989 World Cup Championship. Asprilla was still serving his apprenticeship and did not take part. He was drafted into the first team a year later and immediately gained his first honour, in the Inter-America Cup. His first League title followed in 1991.

No matter how Asprilla's experience in Italy evolves, he will have significant memories of his adopted country. His teenage wife is due to give birth to their first child later this year, and his club's assault on the Cup-winners' Cup may give him a place among Europe's finest.

RAY **DELLA PIETRA**

Asia

by PAUL **MOON** and BOB **PATEMAN**

HONG KONG

Foreign Policy

AS the gap between the rich and poor clubs widens, the Hong Kong FA and clubs are split on whether to cut the number of foreign players allowed.

The FA believe that the quota of five should be allowed to stand until 1993 as planned, but next season the 27,000-seat Hong Kong stadium will be out of action.

That will cause matches to be switched to the much smaller Mongkok stadium and will result in lost gate receipts.

Heavily-sponsored teams such as Borel, Sing Tao and Instant Dict are generally keen to retain five foreigners. Others, such as Happy Valley and South China, would like the quota cut.

THAILAND

TFB keep title

CHAMPIONS Thai Farmers' Bank looked unimpressive in early group play in the Thailand First Division tournament, but retained the trophy on penalties against Bangkok Bank in the final. They also won their quarter and semi-finals on penalties.

The competition was played in two groups of seven, followed by a knock-out from the quarter-final stage.

Royal Thai Navy defeated Royal Thai Army 2-1 for third place.

TFB manager Sansern Aroontharee says he is giving the players a bonus of a one-week trip to England in October.

Port Authority of Thailand, who were eliminated on penalties by TFB, also lost the invitational Saigon Cup event in Vietnam.

They beat the eventual winners, Malaysia Selection, 2-1, but drew 1-1 in their other two matches and lost 5-4 on penalties each time.

CHINA

Klaus takes over

THE Chinese have appointed a second German as coach to their national team. He is 52-year-old Klaus Schlappner, formerly with Carl Zeiss Jena in East Germany.

Schlappner succeeds Rudi Gutendorf, who left after the Chinese squad had failed to qualify for this summer's Olympic Games.

His 15-month contract will be extended if the team qualify for the 1994 World Cup, and is being underwritten by sponsors, Shanghai Volkswagen.

The Chinese are anxious to make progress in the world game, and may adopt a system of professional clubs and imported players.

NEW ZEALAND

Winfield League finally collapses

THE Winfield National League, generally acknowledged as instrumental in taking New Zealand soccer out of the dark ages, has been scrapped.

Progress during its existence can be gauged by the fact that the New Zealand national side lost 11-0 to Manchester United in 1967, three years before the League's foundation, and last year held England to 1-0.

Yet the League has been struggling for several years to counter the effects of escalating travel costs, low attendances and declining interest, from the public, sponsors and the media.

The competition has brought a heavy financial toll upon nearly all participating clubs, and will be replaced next year by what is provisionally called the Winfield Super Club Championship.

This, initially, will involve 30 teams split into three regional sections, with eight qualifying for a complex play-off series culminating in a grand final.

Critics claim that restructuring will bring about a decline in overall standards, and many are adamant the League must be preserved at all costs. But the interest was not great enough to sustain the WNL, which has been terminally ill for nearly a decade, and the wonder is that its demise was delayed so long.

IRAN

Easy for Iran

IRAN and China won their qualifying groups for the tenth Asian Championship without conceding a goal.

The Iranians, playing in Calcutta, beat Pakistan 7-0 after being five up in 20 minutes, then defeated India 3-0 to increase their hopes of another victory in the tournament. They won in 1968, 1972 and 1976.

India beat Pakistan 2-0 in the other match.

China, playing in Singapore, beat Indonesia 2-0, Malaysia 4-0 and Singapore 1-0 — a sad end to home goalkeeper David Lee's long international career.

Political problems mean that only 23 of the Asian Football Confederation's 37 members are taking part in the event.

Saudi Arabia, the defending champions, and Japan, the hosts, qualify automatically, and the other groups are: — Qatar, Syria and Oman *(in Qatar)*; United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Bahrain *(in Dubai)*; South Korea, Bangladesh, Thailand, Philippines *(in Bangkok)*, and North Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Macao *(in Pyongyang)*.

SAUDI ARABIA

SAUDI ARABIA'S Al Hilal deservedly dethroned Esteghlal as Asian club champions, although needing a penalty shoot-out to bring it about.

The Riyadh club won all of their four games at the Asian Champions' Cup tournament in Qatar, while Esteghlal of Iran struggled throughout the ten-day event.

Only superior goal difference over North Koreans Pyongyang enabled the Iranian Army side to qualify for the semi-finals, where they were extremely lucky to overcome Al Rayyan of Qatar.

FIJI

THE 1992 Fijian season began with the FACT Tournament at Labasa, and the host club proved that success in last year's National League — their first major honour — was no fluke by defeating Nadroga 1-0 in the final.

Little striker Solomone Catarogo scored the goal that beat Nadroga, after snatching the winner against Nasinu in the semi-final.

The traditional Indian influence on Fijian soccer is declining, and only five of the 18-man squad for the World Cup qualifiers are of non-Fijian origin.

Abraham Watkins is the best-known player, having made his international debut in 1979.

The Premier Division, with 10 regional clubs, is the main competition, but there are numerous local Leagues and Cups on this sports-mad island.

INDONESIA

PUPUK KALTIM were runners-up for the second successive season in the Galatama, Indonesia's semi-professional League.

Arseto finished top, replacing Pelita Jaya.

The Asian Football Confederation suspended Pelita Jaya for a year and fined them around $US 2,000, following crowd disturbances in their Asian Cup match with Geylang.

INDIA

EAST BENGAL of Calcutta won India's All Airlines Gold Cup for the fourth time in its seven-year history, beating Mohun Bagan 1-0 in the final with a goal by Kuljit Singh after 80 minutes.

Mohun Bagan reached the final on the toss of a coin, after finishing level with Mohammedan Sporting in the qualifying group.

Mohammedan Sporting retained the Sait Nagjee Amarsee Memorial Trophy when they beat Kerala's Titanium Sports club 2-1 in Kozhikode.

IN GOA, Salgaokar won the Bandodkar Gold Cup with a 1-0 victory against Marmugoa Port Trust. A penalty in the 75th minute, by Lawrence Gomes, was the decider.

SINGAPORE

GEYLANG International are the 1992 League champions. They finished a point ahead of Tiong Bahru, with Balestier United a further three points adrift.

UAE

AL-WASL of Dubai won the UAE championship for the fifth time.

SOUTH KOREA

AN extra-time goal by Won Song Yong gave Housing Bank a 1-0 victory over Hanil Bank in the Final of the South Korea President's Cup.

BANGLADESH

THREE KILLED AT TITLE DECIDER

FIERCE rivalry between Abahani and Dhaka Mohammedan, the leading clubs in Bangladesh, claimed three lives at the title-deciding final Dhaka League match of the season.

An 18-year-old student was stabbed to death during the match, and when a battle on the pitch between some of the 60,000 crowd spread to nearby streets, a bus overturned and two people were killed.

At least 50 others were injured, some seriously. The tragedies overshadowed an exciting season, which ended with Abahani taking the title for the eighth time — equalling Mohammedan's total.

Abahani, unbeaten in 18 matches going into the last

JAPAN

by MIKE **PLASTOW** and MICHI **ISHIJIMA**

GRONDONA BACKS THE 2002 CAMPAIGN

HOPES of a World Cup being staged in Japan brightened considerably when FIFA vice-president, Julio Grondona, pledged his backing for the country's bid.

"I'm confident that Japan will be able to host the World Cup in 2002," said Grondona, during a visit to the country. "I'll do all I can to make sure that it happens."

Grondona, president of the Argentine FA, was on a study tour to assess Japan's readiness to stage the second FIFA/JVC Cup, the Under-17 World Championship, in 1993.

Miguel Galan, head of FIFA's competition department, praised every aspect of the stadiums and related facilities: the hotels, airorts, bullet trains and roads.

He said that the mission was only a formality. There had never been any doubt about the result.

The FIFA/JVC Cup is provisionally scheduled to be held in six cities from August 21 — September 4, 1993. Sixteen teams will take part: three each from Europe, South America, North and Central America, Africa and Asia (including Japan), plus one from Oceania.

Grondona . . . confident.

Japan will kick off the tournament at the national stadium in Tokyo.

Other group games, the quarter-finals and one semi-final will be in Kobe, Nagoya, Kyoto, Hiroshima and Gifu, with the second semi-final and final returning to Tokyo.

Players born on or after August 1, 1976, are allowed to take part.

As for 2002, Grondona brushed aside suggestions that the grounds might not be ready: "The Japan Football Association has made tremendous efforts. Japan has the technology. I feel no anxiety. Even Italy had to renew and enlarge stadiums for 1990. Japan can do the same."

Peter Velappan, general secretary of the AFC, voiced the only real doubts. After commending the facilities, he continued: "The important thing now is publicity for the event in Japan and the cooperation of the media. It is absolutely vital for the press and TV to play a positive role, so that there is more awareness of soccer among the Japanese.

"Youth soccer is the fastest-growing sport in Japan. But FIFA and the AFC want to see the same kind of support for all matches in Japan. FIFA do not plan to hold the World Cup in half-empty stadiums."

Kobe's Universiade Stadium.

Abahani . . . 1991-92 Dhaka League champions.

day, needed only a point. Mohammedan had to win to force a play-off: goal difference does not decide the outcome as in other leagues.

A goal by Kuznetsov, who won a gold medal with the Soviet Union in the 1988 Olympics, put Mohammedan ahead, but Abahani manager Salahuddin turned the match with a tactical switch in the second half.

He changed the team's style from 3-5-2 to 4-3-3, and was rewarded with an equaliser and then a winner, both from substitute winger Mamun.

Another Soviet forward, Rahimov, was top League scorer with 17 goals for Mohammedan, including hat-tricks in three successive matches.

AZAM **MAHMOOD**

CLUB FOCUS

JOHOR

Champions of **MALAYSIA**

BY BOB **PATEMAN**

State of the imported art

JOHOR, like all the sides in the Malaysian League, are a state team. Club football does take place in Malaysia, but it generally occupies junior status.

The inter-state competitions bring in the crowds, the money and the big names.

Johor, the southern state closest to Singapore, has grown wealthy from rubber and tin, but is primarily a rural area that does not favour the development of strong sports teams.

Their first successful spell came in the early sixties. In 1963 they finished third in their regional group, and the following year they moved up to second. At the time Yusof Hamid was the star.

Johor had another good run at the turn of the decade, finishing second in both 1969 and 1970. At this time only the champions went through to the Cup play-offs, and it was 1972 before Johor finally topped the group.

Ironically they started that season with a 5-0 defeat in Singapore, but then went unbeaten for five games. They got the better of rivals Singapore in the return match, and took the group by a single point.

Kunja Maha Ahmad, who scored twice in this vital Singapore game, was now their best-known player.

Johor's first appearance in the play-offs ended at the hands of Perak, who edged them out 3-2 over two legs. It was to be their last play-off appearance for nearly ten years.

In 1979 Malaysia staged their first League competition and Johor finished 11th with a 5-5-6 record. They did a little better the following year, but not until 1981 did they start to put their results together.

They were leaders for the first half of the season, but lost ground and eventually dropped to fifth, but this was still good enough to make the now enlarged play-offs.

In the knock-out stages they defeated Perlis on penalties before again losing to Singapore.

In 1984 Johor edged into the play-offs in last spot, but then found their best form. They beat Malacca in the quarter-finals and won their first semi-final match against Pahang 2-0.

Just as they seemed to have one foot in the final, however, they collapsed in the return and lost 4-0.

Johor kept up the momentum the following year and they won ten of their 15 games to take second place.

They followed by sweeping into the Cup Final with wins over Armed Forces (4-0) and Selangor (2-0), and in the final, goals from Muhidin Hussein and Fadzli Ahmad were too much for Federal Territory.

This is seen as an historic victory, for with Pahang having won the title two years earlier there were now clear signs that the old Selangor-Singapore-Penang monopoly was being challenged.

Johor returned to the final the following year and went ahead after four minutes. They were then swept aside by Selangor who — with local legend Mokhtar Dahari playing the final match of his career — hit six goals.

The team reached the play-offs for the next three consecutive seasons, only to crash on each occasion.

During this spell they built up an East European link, and at one point had three Yugoslavs on their books. Mate Boravac and Jure Jeramaz did not last, but Ervin Bolban stayed on.

Generally the club have adapted well to the semi-professional league, and in 1990 they went tantalisingly close to reaching their third final.

They had achieved a goalless draw in Singapore, and when Nasir Yusof put them ahead in the second leg they seemed to be heading for victory. Singapore, however, struck back and Abbas Saad hit two goals.

The club prepared for the 1991 season determined to build on their success. Their first target was a coach, and the man they had in mind was Australian Michael Urukalo, 40, who had worked with the Australian Youth team and APIA Leichardt.

Urukalo was to prove controversial — there was a stand-up argument with Ken Worden that led to a suspension — but he was also determined to win.

His first move was to tempt Edwards and Saad to his new club. The Australian duo welcomed the change to work with an Australian coach and were to prove vital to the team's success.

Indeed, one of the worrying aspects of the team is how much they have come to depend on their imported stars to score the goals.

THE PLAYERS

JOHOR, like all Malaysian sides, have a core of contracted players, and these generally include three foreigners. Nearer the start of the season the club supplement their squad by holding trial matches for the best locals.

Of the 1991 squad, 23-year-old goalkeeper HASSAN MISKAM improved tremendously and looked the best of the local keepers player in the league.

NASARUDDIN ATAN is the iron man of the defence. He is 25, in his fourth season with the club, and kept his promise to shave his head if the side reached the final.

Alongside him sweeper ROSLAN HAMID has been a regular in the team since 1988 and is the man who keeps things organised at the back.

Right-back SANI OTHMAN has held his place in the team since 1987 and is a solid, dependable player. On the left the younger SUZALI NASIR is a member of the Malaysian international squad.

The midfield dynamo of the side is ABBAS SAAD who, despite his name, is Australian. He is an attacking midfield player and, with 11 goals, won the golden boot as the league's top scorer.

KHALID SHADAN, although younger than Yusof, was voted man of the match in the 1985 final and is a hard-working team member.

ANNUAR ABU BAKAR, a traditional winger, and AIDIEL MOHAMED NOOR, a defensive midfield player, are others who feature in the first-team plans.

ALISTAIR EDWARDS is a 23-year-old Australian who gets into the thick of the action. His goals in the play-offs took his total to 12. He married a local girl at the end of the season and, after some delay, signed for Johor for a second year.

Yugoslavian ERVIN BOBAN was one of the first imported players to join the semi-professional league. Perhaps because he rarely shows his emotions he has never really endeared himself to the local fans. Boban is more a target man than a scorer, and his value is often to lay the ball off for others.

Cameroon give new boys a tough time

BY EUGENE **ABRAHAMS**

SOUTH AFRICA celebrated their return to the international football family within days of FIFA's forgiving vote by hosting a three-match series against Cameroon.

The historical significance of the tour, which ended 28 years of international isolation, was not lost on the Cameroon players, many of whom had always wanted to visit South Africa.

The state of the black townships shocked the majority of the Cameroon players but many felt it was only a matter of time before the wrongs were righted.

Bertin Ebwelle said: "It will all come right but it was important that we came to see for ourselves. Now we can go back and say that South Africa is not that bad."

At one stage the tour looked set to be cancelled by the African National Congress following the massacre at Boipatong, but goodwill and commonsense prevailed and apart from seeing an international team in action, most of the questions about South African soccer were answered.

Naturally, given the lack of international experience, South Africa have a lot to learn, but the rich wealth of natural talent is there. All they need is the right touch.

Strangely, the South African Football Association, who could have used national TV to bring the local game (perceived by many whites as a "black man's game") to the rest of the country, pledged solidarity with the black workers on strike at the SA Broadcasting Corporation and refused to reach an agreement with the SATV. Hence a total wipe-out of the games.

The theme for the Cameroon tour was meant to be Peace and Democracy. The on-field actions, however, didn't always bear this out as Cameroon showed more of the ruthless side of their play than glimpses of their true class. They also threatened to abandon the tour after the second international, claiming the referee, Botswana's Bakwadi Mothobi, was incompetent.

"If he is a FIFA-qualified referee, then Lord help us," said Cameroon midfielder Jean-Claude Pagal.

But many of the decisions which went against Cameroon were their own fault. The first incident was accepted in all innocence by South Africa. The home team's Doctor Khumalo had mesmerised Pagal with his dazzling ball skills, and his reward was to be spat on.

This was followed by South Africa's players being hacked from behind, over-the-ball tackles, pulling of jerseys, elbows into the ribs, punches in the back . . . and this was only in the first match!

South Africa won this first international, played at the King's Park Rugby Stadium in Durban, through a controversial penalty from Khumalo. Cameroon's captain for the night, defender Stephen Tataw, slipped on the wet grass and accidently touched the ball with a hand. Khumalo made no mistake with the penalty.

But not all the Cameroon players were involved in handing out the rough stuff. As Tataw, who limped off injured in that first match, said: "These games were supposed to be for fun, to be part of the country's celebration back into international soccer, but they have taken on a more serious and ugly dimension."

It went from bad to worse in the second match, at Cape Town's Goodwood Showgrounds. Cameroon fought back from 1-0 down to win 2-1 despite having only nine men, after Pagal and Jules Denis Onana were sent off.

South African defender Lucas Radebe showed the scars where Cameroon studs had raked through his socks and he had to be carried on to the team bus.

The constant questioning of Mothobi's decisions by the Cameroon players also overshadowed the glimpses of true class that some of their players showed.

Veteran Roger Milla, who showed that life begins whenever you want it, had originally come to South Africa as a businessman. He played in all three games and laid on the pass of the series when he set up Cameroon's second goal in Cape Town.

In the third match, suffering from influenza, he outfought the South African captain, Neil Tovey, in midfield with one sleight of hip to set up Pagal's goal.

Besides making many friends and influencing thousands of others, he also left with a five-week contract to play for the Cape Town-based National Soccer League side, Hellenic, who are currently second.

The third international, at the headquarters of South African soccer, the FNB Stadium in Johannesburg,

Back in international action again . . . South Africa's David Nyathi tackles Cameroon striker Bertin Ebwelle.

Back in international action . . . South African skipper Neil Tovey challenges Cameroon's Jean-Claude Pagal.

Upsets at home, but all eyes are on Spain

THE run-in to the end of the first round of the League's First Division threw up some pleasant surprises.

Upsets are not common occurrences in Ghanaian football. The best the other clubs hope for when playing the top two, Accra's Hearts of Oak and Kumasi's Asante Kotoko, is a gallant display ending in a narrow defeat.

So when, with four games left, Dawu Youngsters, just five years old as a club, had Kotoko sweating in front of their home fans for a last-minute equaliser, coming events seemed ominous.

Dawu then hosted and defeated Hearts 2-0 in an ill-tempered match. The most refreshing performance however was an emphatic 2-0 defeat of Hearts in front of their vociferous fans by previously struggling Mampong Kumapim Stars.

For consistency however, Goldfields FC are the club of the first round. Managed by Englishman David Booth, they have given the top clubs a run for their money.

Bobby Charlton's interest in the club is paying dividends and he was here recently for the formal opening of a multi-million dollar all-purpose stadium in Obuasi.

The celebrations seem to have taken a toll on the players for they lost the match commemorating the event by 1-0, their only defeat so far.

Kotoko, unbeaten so far, are top with 23 points. Hearts and Goldfields are joint second with 17 each. Maxwel Konadu tops the goal charts with six.

All attention is now focused on the Olympic under-23 team, the Black Meteors, handled by Sam Arday who also coaches Asante Kotoko.

Expectations are high, as usual. A good blend of local players such as Shamo Quaye, Maxwel Konadu, Nii Darko and the promising Frank Amankwaah and such Europe-based talents as Nii Lamptey, Isaac Asare, Emmanuel Tetteh, Kwame Ayew and Mike Osei, among others, should see Ghana in the medal zone.

Indiscipline is likely to rob the squad of a top player, Joe Addo, a defensive midfielder. He was suspended, together with Emmanuel Armah, for assaulting the referee during a local derby between their club, Hearts, and arch rivals

drew 55,000 fans. South Africa twice came from behind to draw 2-2 with goals by cousins Chippa and Bennett Masinga in reply to Pagal and Jacob Ewane.

Any shortcomings that were evident, were to be expected, but at least Cameroon set an example to South Africa in their appreciation of the essential, basic formula required for international soccer.

South Africa's tactics in the two opening games were too similar to the old-fashioned English style. With their ball skills, the home team should have sought more ambitious objectives rather than massed defence and counter-attack.

The only player who seemed to know what was expected was the FC Zurich-based Augustine Makalakane. But Khumalo, Tovey, and 'keeper Mark Anderson improved as the series went on.

Hopefully these lessons will be put to good use when South Africa visit Zimbabwe and, two weeks later, Zambia come calling in the African Nations' Cup preliminaries.

The visit of Crystal Palace, the first English club to tour South Africa for 28 years, left National Soccer League chairman Ashwin Trikamjee, in no doubt that local soccer is in a healthy state.

Playing the country's top team Kazier Chiefs at the FNB Stadium, Palace won 3-2 after trailing 2-1 midway through the second half, with goals from Mark Bright (2) and substitute John Salako. Shane McGregor and Donald Khuse replied for Chiefs.

The next day, at Durban's King's Park Stadium, it was a different matter as the physically strong Orlando Pirates took the game to Palace and beat them 2-1. Brazilian striker Pio Nogueira (2) and Bright got the goals.

Trikamjee said: "Many critics did not think much of our standard. Chiefs and Pirates have proved that we are not too badly off after all."

Palace manager Steve Coppell said: "South Africa can make their mark in world soccer providing your players stop show-boating (playing to the crowd). Both clubs have some talented players but Pirates do the business."

Great Olympics. The 12-month suspension means he might not be in Barcelona.

He won't be missed much, as selection promises to be the bane of this under-23 side with so many brilliant players vying for selection, including at least 15 in Europe.

Sanity has returned to the game following the appointment of a veteran sports administrator, Joe Lartey as chairman/ executive secretary of a three-man management team for the football association (GFA).

The League programme has been smooth and would have been on schedule but for a government directive that midweek games should be played after 5.00pm, when most work places have closed officially until the next day.

It is a virtual ban given that only the Kumasi Sports Stadium has floodlights.

With Kotoko, Olympics, RTU and Dawu engaged in continental tournaments the GFA had sought to use midweek fixtures to clear outstanding matches.

Not surprisingly this hampered the squad's preparation for the Olympic Games.

BABA **KASSIM**

African Nations' Cup

HOSTS TUNISIA AMONG THE FAVOURITES

THE DRAW

Group One: Benin, Cameroon, Gabon, Niger.
Two: Ethiopia, Nigeria, Sudan, Uganda.
Three: Algeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, winner Cape Verde Islands/Guinea Bissau.
Four: Kenya, Mozambique, Zaire, winner Botswana/ Lesotho.
Five: Mauritius, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe.
Six: Burundi, Chad, Congo, Guinea.
Seven: Burkina Faso, Ghana, Liberia, Tanzania.
Eight: Egypt, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco.

Tunisia *(hosts)* and Ivory Coast *(holders)* qualify automatically.

OPENING MATCHES

August 14-16: Benin v Niger, Gabon v Cameroon, Uganda v Ethiopia, Sudan v Nigeria, Algeria v Cape Verde Islands or Guinea Bissau, Senegal v Togo, Zaire v Mozambique, Lesotho or Botswana v Kenya, Zimbabwe v South Africa, Zambia v Mauritius, Chad v Guinea, Burundi v Congo, Tanzania v Ghana, Burkina Faso v Liberia, Mauritania v Mali, Malawi v Egypt.

August 28-30: Cameroon v Benin, Niger v Gabon, Nigeria v Uganda, Ethiopia v Sudan, Sierre Leone v Algeria, Cape Verde Islands or Guinea Bissau v Senegal, Kenya v Zaire, Mauritius v Zimbabwe, Congo v Chad, Guinea v Burundi, Liberia v Tanzania, Ghana v Burkina Faso, Morocco v Mauritania, Mali v Malawi.

THE African Nations' Cup takes place every two years, and qualifying starts this month for the 1994 tournament.

The games will be played in Tunisia, with 36 nations competing. The hosts and the holders, Ivory Coast, are already sure of places in the 12 finalists.

The other competitors are divided into eight groups, much of the draw having been arranged behind closed doors by the Confederation of African Football — well aware of political and geographical needs.

South Africa, returning to international competition, were put in the same group as Egypt and Morocco, but were switched to join Mauritius, Zimbabwe and Zambia — presumably to help ease their qualification. That, of course, should ensure hefty TV rights for CAF.

Ghana, beaten finalists this year, are in an easy group with Burkina Faso, Tanzania and Liberia.

Burkina Faso have withdrawn from the World Cup on financial grounds, Tanzania are usually the whipping-boys for everybody else, and war-torn Liberia have little apart from the Monaco pair, Weah and Debah.

Cameroon and Nigeria, semi-finalists this year, also have apparently easy draws.

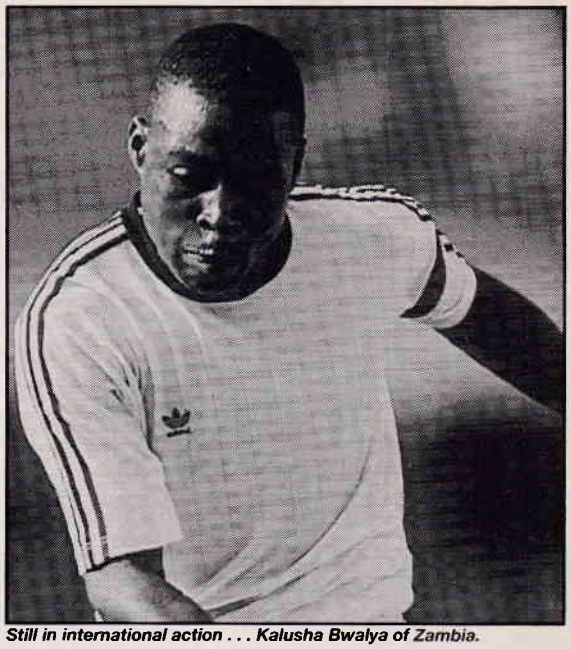
The declining Lions need worry only about Gabon, while Sudan and Uganda, the main opposition to the Nigerians, are strong at home but poor travellers.

Egypt and Morocco seem certain to qualify from the five-nation Group Eight, with Algeria and Senegal equally favoured in the other five-sided group.

Congo, surprise quarter-finalists this year, should go as far again by topping Group Six.

Group Four, with Kenya, Mozambique and Zaire among the four contestants, could be a close affair, and so could Group Five. Much depends on whether the European-based Zambians, Bwalya (PSV) and Musonda (Anderlecht) are in the line-up.

As holders, the Ivorians will command respect — remember that they did not concede a goal in this year's finals.



Still in international action . . . Kalusha Bwalya of Zambia.

Le Roy switches to Club Africain

AFRICA'S reigning club champions are still on course for the defence of their Champions' Cup title.

Club Africain of Tunisia sneaked past Angolans, Primiero Agosto, to book a berth in this year's quarter-finals, turning a 2-0 deficit into a 3-2 aggregate win.

The Tunisians, convincing winners last year, had a torrid time in the opening leg in Luanda, but recovered at home, thanks mainly to striker Faouzi Rouissi.

Club Africain have a new coach, Frenchman Claude Le Roy, who has taken over from Romanian Balaci Ilic.

Le Roy was the coach of Cameroon's winning team at the 1988 African Nations' Cup, and his last spell was in charge of Senegal, quarter-finalists this year.

Canon Yaounde of Cameroon limped into the second round after a penalty shoot-out against Mighty Blackpool of Sierre Leone. But they then came unstuck against Gor Mahia of Kenya, going out on away goals.

Julius Berger of Nigeria were beaten 2-1 on aggregate by Wydad Casablanca of Morocco, after failing to score at home in the first leg.

Ismailia of Egypt needed a shoot-out to beat Algeria's Mouloudia Constantine, and El Hilal of Sudan, had a walkover when AS Sotema from Madagascar withdrew.

ASEC Abidjan of the Ivory Coast have won all their matches in the two rounds so far, with discarded national team striker Michel Bassole among the goals.

Red Devils of Zambia also have a 100 per cent record, with 15 goals in four matches. Cup-winners' Cup holders Power Dynamos of Zambia went out after withdrawing from their second-round tie against Vital 'O of Burundi. The players were on strike in a wage dispute, which has led to a year-long suspension for captain Wisdom Chansa, and refused to travel north.

Perhaps this is a sign of things to come from the Zambian teams, who enjoyed great patronage under President Kenneth Kaunda, but have now been hit by the austerity measures of his successor, Frederick Chiluba.

Kabwe Warriors, the other Zambian representatives, went out in a shoot-out to Egypt's Al Ahly. The greatest opposition should come from Africa Sports (Ivory Coast) and 1989 winners Al Merreikh of Sudan.

The rest include some real surprises, notably Fatima Red Devils from the Central African Republic and Benin's Mogas 90 FC.

MARK **GLEESON**

diary

World Soccer's news service conducted by
KEIR RADNEDGE

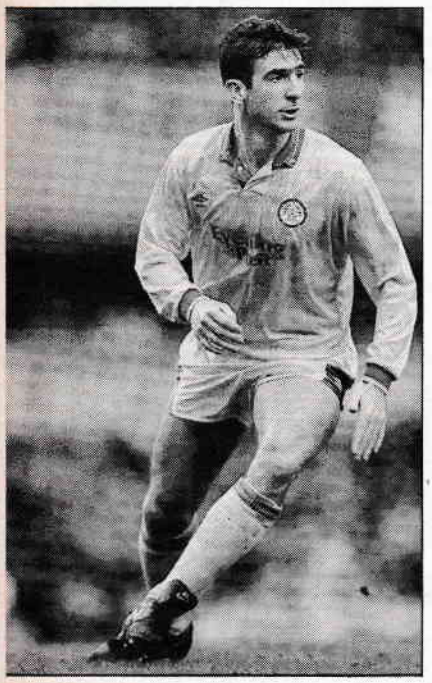
MONDAY, MAY 4

(continued from June edition)

CAMEROON: *Cameroon agree to be the first national team to visit South Africa once the republic is restored to FIFA membership in June. A three-match tour is planned.*

CZECHOSLOVAKIA: *Sigma Olomouc agree terms with Bayer Leverkusen for the summer sale of star midfielder Pavel Hapal.*

ENGLAND: *France striker Eric Cantona (below) agrees details of a three-year contract to stay with Leeds.*



PORTUGAL: *UEFA's executive delays for a day an announcement on which country shall play host to the 1996 European finals.*

SCOTLAND: *Uncapped Alan McLaren, Duncan Ferguson and Stephen Wright are included in the national squad to tour North America and then, probably, go on to the European finals. Pat Nevin, about to be discarded by Everton, is called up to replace injured Gordon Strachan.*

SPAIN: *Atletico Madrid's players are offered a Rolls-Royce each if they win the championship . . . Barcelona coach Johan Cruyff says his team blew their chance of retaining the title in dropping a weekend point against Burgos.*

TUESDAY, MAY 5

ACTION: *San Lorenzo reach the quarter-finals of the South American Club Cup thanks to a 6-5 victory over Deportivo Valdez of Ecuador in Guayaquil.*

FRANCE: *Disaster in Corsica where more than 20 people are reported dead and 1,000 injured after a temporary grandstand collapses before the start of a French Cup semi-final between Bastia and Marseille.*

GERMANY: *Frankfurt, Stuttgart and Dortmund all win away to remain locked in battle at the top of the table with two games to go . . . public sector strike action delays the departure of Werder Bremen for the Cup-winners' Cup Final in Lisbon.*

PORTUGAL: *UEFA choose England as host for the 1996 European Championship finals. Other contenders were Austria, Greece, Holland and Portugal. UEFA also decide that yellow cards issued in the European qualifiers shall not count in the finals,thus reversing an earlier decision.*

YUGOSLAVIA: *Red Star agree the end-of-season sale of sweeper Miodrag Belodedic to Valencia of Spain.*

WEDNESDAY, MAY 6

ACTION: *Romania beat the Faroe Islands 7-0 in a World Cup qualifier . . . Barcelona of Ecuador reach the South American Club Cup semi-finals thanks to a 2-0 (2-1 aggregate) defeat of the defending title-holders Colo Colo of Chile . . . Werder Bremen beat Monaco 2-0 in the European Cup-winners' Cup Final in Lisbon.*

BRAZIL: *Brazil name a squad weakened by club calls for the Wembley friendly against England.*

FRANCE: *A criminal investigation is opened in Corsica into the Bastia stadium disaster. Messages of sympathy pour in from around Europe plus offers of assistance in raising cash for dependents of the accident victims.*

HOLLAND: *Manager Rinus Michels names a preliminary squad of 25 to prepare for the European finals.*

ITALY: *Diego Maradona is, in his absence, ordered by a Naples civil court to pay maintenance of £2,500 per month to the mother of an illegitimate son.*

SCOTLAND: *Stephen Wright pulls out of Scotland's squad after only two days, needing a wrist operation to cure an injury which had troubled him during the league season.*

SWITZERLAND: *Young Boys sign 16-year-old Australian forward Paul Agostino from West Adelaide.*

UKRAINE: *The federation demands that the CIS national team be disbanded after the European finals and that the new ex-Soviet states play off for the place originally allocated to the Soviet Union in the World Cup qualifiers.*

UNITED STATES: *Dallas is chosen as International Broadcast centre for the 1994 World Cup finals.*

THURSDAY, MAY 7

ACTION: *Sweden beat Poland 5-0 in a Stockholm friendly.*

FRANCE: *Bastia withdraw from the French Cup in the wake of the Corsica stadium disaster. The federation decide that all proceeds from a delayed final between Marseille and Monaco should go to a victims' benefit fund.*

ITALY: *A Baggio penalty brings Juventus a 1-0 defeat of Parma in the first leg of the Cup final.*

PORTUGAL: *Porto win 2-0 away to Leixoes in a cup semi-final and now face local rivals Boavista in the final.*

SPAIN: *Real Madrid's injury-jinxed Robert Prosinecki flies to Lausanne, Switzerland, for further tests of the thigh muscle tear which has kept him out of action for most of the season.*

UNITED STATES: *Las Vegas is named as venue for the draw for the World Cup finals, on December 18 or 19, 1993.*

FRIDAY, MAY 8

ENGLAND: *Osvaldo Ardiles, sacked last season by Newcastle, is appointed manager of Third Division West Bromwich in succession to Coventry-bound Bobby Gould.*

FRANCE: *A construction company official is the first arrest by a magistrate investigating the Corsica stadium disaster. The players of both Monaco and Marseille refuse to consider playing the Cup Final out of respect for the disaster victims' families.*

SOUTH AFRICA: *A dispute over money leads the South African federation to cancel the proposed tour by Cameroon.*

SATURDAY, MAY 9

ACTION: *Liverpool beat Sunderland 2-0 to win the FA Cup Final at Wembley . . . Dortmund win 3-1 at home to Leverkusen to pull level on points with Frankfurt and Stuttgart at the top of the league with one game to go . . . AEK thrash Doxa Drama 5-1 to stay two points clear of Olympiakos in Greece . . . champions Rangers beat Airdrie 2-1 in the Scottish Cup final but Airdrie's consolation is a place in Europe . . . an injury-time goal from Lacatus brings Oviedo a 1-0 win over leaders Real Madrid in Spain . . . CIS forward Igor Dobrovolski scores twice to lead Servette to victory over Young Boys in Switzerland . . . Besiktas secure the Turkish title thanks to a 4-3 win over Galatasaray.*

SOUTH AFRICA: *Local officials deny that the Cameroon tour has been cancelled.*

SUNDAY, MAY 10

ACTION: *Two goals from Oliveira bring Anderlecht a 2-1 win away to Standard Liege in Belgium but Brugge stay one point clear . . . Fluminense players are forced to leave by a back door after fans, infuriated by a 1-1 draw with Sport Recife, stone the club offices . . . Moscow Spartak beat CSKA Moscow 2-0 in the first and last CIS Cup final — which is delayed for an hour because ofa bomb scare . . . Feyenoord retain the Dutch Cup thanks to a 3-0 defeat of Roda JC . . . David Platt's Bari are condemned to relegation in Italy by a goalless draw away to Cagliari (while, simultaneously, Bari unofficialy agree terms with Juventus for his summer transfer). Milan are held 1-1 at Napoli but the point is enough to secure them the league title with two games remaining . . . in Spain Atletico Madrid beat Gijon and Barcelona win 2-0 at Cadiz to step up the pressure on leaders Real Madrid.*

PORTUGAL: *Benfica appoint Tomislav Ivic (currently on leave of absence from Marseille) as coach for next season in succession to Sampdoria-bound Sven-Goran Eriksson.*

SCOTLAND: *Rangers striker Ally McCoist is voted Players' Player of the Year.*

MONDAY, MAY 11

AUSTRIA: *FC Tirol, shortly to revert to their previous title as Wacker Innsbruck, bring back Branko Elsner as coach.*

DENMARK: *Outgoing champions Brondby sack coach Morten Olsen in the wake of a 3-2 defeat by Silkeborg which pushes Brondby next to bottom of the table.*

ITALY: *Inter midfielder Stefano Desideri is fined £15,000 for insulting coach Luis Suarez.*

JAPAN: *Bobby Charlton is appointed "overseas adviser" to Japan's 2002 World Cup bidding committee.*

PORTUGAL: *Bobby Robson signs a two-year contract to coach Sporting.*

TUESDAY, MAY 12

ACTION: *England beat Hungary 1-0 in a European Championship warm-up . . . Greece beat Iceland 3-1 in a European Under-21 tie.*

ITALY: *Milan spearhead Marco Van Basten owns up to a nagging ankle injury but says he should be fit for Euro '92.*

PORTUGAL: *Dutch defender Stan Valckx follows coach Bobby Robson from PSV Eindhoven to Sporting Lisbon.*

PLAYER OF THE MONTH:

Gary Lineker . . . in recognition of his career-long contribution to English football.

TEAM OF THE MONTH.

Denmark . . . inevitably after their European Championship triumph in Sweden.

SCOTLAND: *Ibrox Park will be Scotland's home next season because of redevelopment at Hampden Park.*

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13

ACTION: *Ajax and Torino draw 0-0 in the UEFA Cup Final second leg in Amsterdam but Ajax win on the away goals rule, courtesy of the 2-2 draw a fortnight earlier in Italy . . . Greece beat Iceland 1-0 in a World Cup qualifier . . . Australia are held 1-1 at home by Holland in an Olympic qualifying play-off . . . Norway beat the Faroes Islands 2-0 in a friendly.*

CZECHOSLOVAKIA: *Defender Ivo Stas (above) signs for Banik Ostrava after two unhappy years in England with Aston Villa in which injury prevented him from playing any competitive football.*

ENGLAND: *England are revealed as on £50,000-a-man to win the European finals.*

FRANCE: *Marseille sign Cameroon World Cup striker Francois Omam-Biyik and French Under-21 international Zinedine Zidane from relegated Cannes . . . Strasbourg beat Rennes 4-1 in a decisive promotion play-off.*

ITALY: *Parma beat Juventus 2-0 to win the Italian Cup on a 2-1 aggregate.*

SWITZERLAND: *FIFA report that Sao Tome e Principe have withdrawn from the World Cup qualifiers . . . Dutch caretaker coach Leen Looijen is appointed for a further year by St Gallen.*

UNITED STATES: *At last the controversial Coin Bill is signed into law by President Bush.*

THURSDAY, MAY 14

ACTION: *Finland lose 2-0 at home to Bulgaria in a World Cup qualifier . . . Canada lose 2-1 in Vancouver to the United States who thus qualify for next year's World Youth Cup finals in Australia.*

FRANCE: *A radio technician dies from injuries suffered in the Corsica stadium disaster, the 14th death. Some 425 other injury victims remain in hospital . . . debt-ridden Toulon are relegated to the Second Division by order of the federation.*

FRIDAY, MAY 15

ENGLAND: *Liverpool's Rob Jones pulls out of England's European finals squad because of injury . . . Tottenham dismiss manager Peter Shreeves, for the second time in his career.*

SATURDAY, MAY 16

ACTION: *Stuttgart win 2-1 away to Leverkusen to snatch the German League title on the last day of the season. The winning goal is scored by Guido Buchwald . . . Real Madrid stay two points ahead of Barcelona in Spain thanks to a 3-2 victory over neighbours Atletico. Real hit back from 2-1 down thanks to second-half goals from Butragueno and Maqueda.*

SUNDAY, MAY 17

ACTION: *England and Brazil draw 1-1 at Wembley . . . the United States lose 1-0 to Scotland in Denver . . . Canada beat the US 2-1 in an Olympic qualifier . . . Brugge clinch the Belgian championship thanks to a 3-2 win over Mechelen . . . Ruud Gullit returns from injury to score a goal and inspire Milan to a 4-0 defeat of Fiorentina in the penultimate round of the season . . . Besiktas become the first team to win the Turkish title unbeaten when they defeat Sariyer 1-0.*

MONDAY, MAY 18

ENGLAND: *BSkyB and the BBC clinch a £304million deal to televise the Premier League live and in highlights for the next five years . . . Paul Gascoigne starts his fitness test so Lazio officials can judge his recovery from that knee injury . . . Lee Dixon and David Batty are surprise inclusions in England's squad for the European finals.*

GERMANY: *Berti Vogts names 11 of the 1990 World Cup-winning squad in his party for Euro '92.*

SWEDEN: *The hosts' squad for the European finals is without veteran defender Glenn Peter Stromberg and injured forward Stefan Pettersson.*

TUESDAY, MAY 19

ACTION: *Wales beat Romania 3-2 in an Under-21 international in Bucharest . . . Milan lose 1-0 at home to Brazil in a TV friendly.*

CIS: *National manager Anatoli Bishovets names a preliminary squad of 25 for the European finals. Benfica provide three players: Kulkov, Yuran and Mostovoi.*

FRANCE: *Parliament debates proposals to tighten stadium security and safety.*

GERMANY: *Kalli Feldkamp quits as Kaiserslautern coach after winning the Cup and the League in his three seasons in charge.*

ITALY: *Inter sign Foggia's CIS midfielder Igor Shalimov for £8million.*

SPAIN: *Johan Cruyff is awarded a new contract whether Barcelona win or lose tomorrow's Champions' Cup Final against Sampdoria.*

WEDNESDAY, MAY 20

ACTION: *Barcelona beat Sampdoria 1-0 in the Champions' Cup Final at Wembley thanks to an extra-time free-kick by Ronald Koeman . . . Romania beat Wales 5-1 in a World Cup qualifier . . . Canada lose 3-1 at home to Scotland in Toronto . . . Sao Paulo draw1-1 away to fellow Brazilians Criciuma and qualify by a 2-1 aggregate for the semi-finals of the South American Club Cup; Barcelona beat Cerro Porteno 4-3 on penalties despite the brilliance of the Paraguayans' Argentine goalkeeper Sergio Goycochea.*

HUNGARY: *Ujpest beat Vac 1-0 in the Cup Final.*

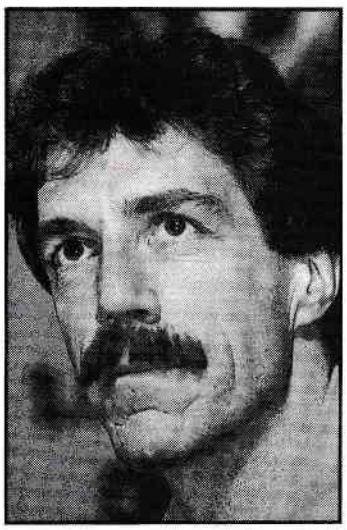
SOUTH AFRICA: *National coach Jeff Butler is the subject of allegations, which he denies, that his original career claims had been misleading.*

THURSDAY, MAY 21

FRANCE: *Promoted Bordeaux sign Brazilians Valdeir and Marcio Santos (both Botafogo) on loan for next season . . . injury doubts surround Jean-Pierre Papin with little more than two weeks to goto the European finals.*

GERMANY: *Werder Bremen, new Cup-winners' Cup holders, sign goalkeeper Hansi Grundelach from FC Homburg.*

FRIDAY, MAY 22



GERMANY: *Helmut Schulte (above) quits as coach to Dynamo Dresden.*

ITALY: *Sampdoria's Champions' Cup Final defeat provokes, almost instantly, the world record £12million sale of Gianluca Vialli to Juventus.*

SATURDAY, MAY 23

ACTION: *Jamaica beat Puerto Rico 2-1 in a World Cup qualifier . . . Second Division Hannover beat Borussia Monchengladbach 4-3 on penalties after a 0-0 draw to win the German Cup final . . . Real Madrid scrape a lucky 1-1 draw at Osasuna . . . Sion draw 0-0 away to Servette to win the Swiss League for the first time.*

ENGLAND: *Liverpool's John Barnes passes a fitness test to confirm his presence in England's European Championship squad.*

FRANCE: *Bernard Tapie, Marseille's president, resigns as Minister for Urban Affairs to fight charges of business malpractice.*

YUGOSLAVIA: *Ivica Osim quits as national coach two weeks before the finals of the European Championship, in protest at the fighting in and around his home city of Sarajevo.*

SUNDAY, MAY 24

ACTION: *Holland are held 2-2 at home after extra time by Australia, who thus qualify for the Olympic finals on the away goals rule . . . former Brazilian World Cup winger Muller is sent off as Sao Paulo crash 3-0 to Paysandu . . . Milan thrash Foggia 8-2 away in an incredible game on the last weekend of the Italian season. They win the championship and become the first club to complete a 34-game season unbeaten. Juventus, Torino, Napoli and Roma fill the UEFA Cup places. Marco Van Basten, with 25 goals (including nine penalties) is the league's top scorer . . . Boavista beat neighbours and League champions Porto 2-1 in the Portuguese Cup Final . . . Stoichkov, Nadal and Koeman each score twice as Barcelona win 6-0 away to Valladolid to move within one point of leaders Real Madrid with two games to play . . . Red Star Belgrade's last match of a disrupted season, against Zeljeznicar Sarajevo, is cancelled but Red Star still win the Yugoslav League title with a four-point lead over runners-up Partizan.*

MONDAY, MAY 25

ACTION: *The Irish Republic beat Albania 3-1 in Dublin in a European Under-21 qualifier.*

AUSTRIA: *Rapid sell Andy Herzog to Werder Bremen.*

ENGLAND: *Rangers right-back Gary Stevens is called up to replace injured Lee Dixon in England's Euro '92 squad.*

HOLLAND: *Rinus Michels drops Barcelona's Richard Witschge from his Euro '92 squad because of fitness doubts. Peter Van Vossen, of Beveren, also pulls out after serious illness. His place goes to Gent striker Eric Viscaal.*

ITALY: *Inter and Real Madrid agree a £3million fee for German striker Jurgen Klinsmann but the player's personal terms present problems for Madrid's negotiators . . . top sports politicians Franco Carraro, Arrigo Gattai and Primo Nebiolo are to be interviewed in an investigation into irregularities in the costly redevelopment of the Stadio Olimpico in Rome before the 1990 World Cup finals . . . Lazio formally confirm the completion of Paul Gascoigne's transfer from Tottenham.*

TUESDAY, MAY 26

YUGOSLAVIA: *Darko Pancev quits the Yugoslav national squad. Pancev comes from Macedonia, the only one of the four breakaway republics which still lacks international recognition.*

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Bruno Conti . . . star of Italy's 1982 World Cup triumph and now a youth coach with his old club, Roma.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 27

ACTION: *Holland beat Austria 3-2 in a friendly international, Poland beat Czechoslovakia 1-0 and Sweden beat Hungary 2-1, Switzerland beat France 2-1 and Italian club side Fiorentina beat Yugoslavia 2-1 . . . in the South American Club Cup semi-final first legs, Sao Paulo beat Barcelona of Ecuador 3-0 while Newell's Old Boys are held 1-1 at home by America of Colombia.*

BULGARIA: *Levski beat Pirin 5-0 in the Cup Final.*

GREECE: *Olympiakos beat PAOK 2-0 to win the Greek Cup 3-1 on aggregate.*

CONTINUED OVER

SWEDEN: UEFA president Lennart Johansson admits publicly for the first time that Yugoslavia are in serious danger of being excluded from the European finals because of the risk of terrorist action.

UNITED STATES: Roy Wegerle and Thomas Dooley are called up for the US squad for the US Cup '92.

THURSDAY, MAY 28

ACTION: Italy beat Sweden 2-0 in the first leg of the European Under-21 final.

DENMARK: Aarhus beat B1903 Copenhagen 3-0 in the Cup Final.

SCOTLAND: Coventry's Kevin Gallacher is called up to replace injured Hearts striker John Robertson in Scotland's European finals squad.

SPAIN: Gijon appoint Dutchman Bert Jacobs as coach.

SWEDEN: Yugoslavia are the first of the European Championship finalists to arrive in Sweden.

FRIDAY, MAY 29

FRANCE: The Federation decide not to award the Cup this year, out of respect to the victims of the Corsica stadium disaster.

MEXICO: America of Mexico City bring Hugo Sanchez home from Real Madrid.

SWEDEN: Local police tell UEFA president Lennart Johansson they are confident of handling any security problems which may arise out of Yugoslavia's presence at Euro '92.

SATURDAY, MAY 30

ACTION: International action sees Germany beat Turkey 1-0, Holland beat Wales 4-0, Argentina win 1-0 away to Japan and the United States beat a poor Irish Republic 3-1 in Washington.

DID YOU KNOW?

Tulio Lanese, one of the Euro '92 semi-final referees, has retired — a year early.

CIS: The CIS name a reduced squad of 20 for the European finals. Benfica's Vasili Kulkov is absent after failing to reover from illness in time.

SWEDEN: Swedish organisers and the Yugoslav squad themselves learn that the United Nations has imposed sanctions, including sporting sanctions, on their rump country.

WALES: The International Board, at their annual meeting, decide on a series of measures to speed up and clarify the game. The back-pass to a goalkeeper's hands is barred, referees are told to issue yellow cards to players who encroach at free-kicks and throw the ball away at set-pieces.

SUNDAY, MAY 31

ACTION: Trinidad and Tobago beat Barbados 3-0 in a World Cup qualifier . . . Italy and Portugal draw 0-0 in the US Cup '92. . . CSKA Sofia win the Bulgarian championship after drawing 2-2 away to Botev . . . AEK beat Apollon 2-0 to secure the Greek League title with one game to play . . . no change in Spain: with one game remaining Real Madrid lead Barcelona by one point.

SWEDEN: UEFA formally exclude Yugoslavia from the European Championship finals and summon Denmark in their place.

MONDAY, JUNE 1

ACTION: New Zealand beat Werder Bremen 2-1 in Wellington thanks to a goal from Wynton Rufer — playing for his country against his own club.

FRANCE: Jean Fournet-Fayard, president of the French Federation, is charged with involuntarily homicide over his responsibilities towards the game in general and the Corsica stadium disaster in particular.

GERMANY: European Championship defender Thomas Helmer says he has been sold to French club Auxerre by Borussia Dortmund . . . former East German international Klaus Sammer is appointed new coach of Dynamo Dresden . . . champions Stuttgart buy Switzerland forward Adrian Knup from Luzern.

UNITED STATES: Las Vegas is chosen as venue for the draw for the finals of the 1994 World Cup.

TUESDAY, JUNE 2

ACTION: Germany are held 1-1 in Bremen by Northern Ireland . . . New Zealand draw 1-1 with Werder Bremen in Christchurch . . . Hungary beat Iceland 3-2 in a European Under-21 qualifier.

ARGENTINA: Diego Maradona says that, as his ban comes to an end, he envisages playing again for Boca Juniors in Argentina.

GERMANY: IOC veteran Willi Daume says the Olympic soccer tournament should not be restricted in future to Under-23 players . . . Berti Vogts drops Thomas Helmer from his squad and orders him to sort out a transfer wrangle which has stranded him between Auxerre in France and Bayern Munich in Germany.

SWEDEN: Yugoslavia's players and officials, flying home from the European finals without kicking a ball in anger, are delayed by an argument over refuelling of their charter flight at Stockholm airport.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3

ACTION: Albania beat Lithuania 1-0, Iceland win 2-1 in Hungary and Belgium beat the Faroe Islands 3-0 in World Cup qualifiers; Argentina beat Wales 1-0 in the Kirin Cup in Japan; England win 2-1 in Finland but lose Gary Stevens and John Barnes to major injuries as well as aggravating an old achilles injury of Mark Wright; Norway draw 0-0 at home to Scotland; Denmark and the CIS draw 1-1 in Copenhagen; the US beat Portugal 1-0 in their US Cup '92 game in Chicago . . . Sweden beat Italy 1-0 in the European Under-21 final return but Italy win the crown 2-1 on aggregate.

BELGIUM: Mechelen tell goalkeeper Michel Preud'homme he must honour his contract rather than transfer to Italy with Brescia.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA: Slovan Bratislava win 3-0 at home to Vitkovice to clinch the championship.

GERMANY: Borussia Dortmund line up Australian sweeper Ned Zelic.

HOLLAND: Rinus Michels uses UEFA's authority to ban Ronald Koeman from playing in Barcelona's all-important last match ofthe season.

THURSDAY, JUNE 4

ACTION: Italy beat the Republic of Ireland 2-0 with goals from Signori and Costacurta in their US Cup '92 tie in Foxboro, Mass. Ireland goalkeeper Pat Bonner is sent off.

UNITED STATES: The World Cup organisers announce a domestic TV coverage deal with ABC and the cable network ESPN.

FRIDAY, JUNE 5

ACTION: France and Holland draw 1-1 in Lens in the last of the European Championship warm-ups.

ENGLAND: UEFA give permission to England to call up Andy Sinton nd Keith Curle as late Euro '92 replacements for injured John Barnes and Gary Stevens.

SCOTLAND: Rangers buy Hearts defender Dave McPherson for £1.3million — five times the sum for which they sold him five years ago.

to retain the title.

GERMANY: Thomas Helmer, the Borussia Dortmund midfielder, is reinstated in Germany's European Championship finals squad after Auxerre and Bayern Munich, both interested in signing him, agree to withdraw from transfer negotiations until after the event.

ITALY: Lazio buy Holland midfielder Aron Winter from Ajax.

MONDAY, JUNE 8

DENMARK: Lyngby clinch the Danish championship on the last day of the season — played on the Monday because this is a local holiday. The key players have no time for celebration before setting off to join the national squad en route to Sweden for Euro '92.

ITALY: Juventus pay an English record £7million to buy David Platt from relegated Bari.

SOUTH AFRICA: Stanley Tschabala, former assistant to Jeff Butler, succeeds him as national team manager following controversy over Butler's career record.

SATURDAY, JUNE 6

ACTION: The US win their US Cup '92 event thanks to a 1-1 draw against Italy in Chicago . . . FK Austria win the Austrian Cup final with a 1-0 defeat of Admira Wacker.

SUNDAY, JUNE 7

ACTION: The Irish Republic beat Portugal 2-0 in the last match of the US Cup '92 in Foxboro . . . New Zealand beat Fiji 3-1 in a World Cup qualifier . . . Japan lose 1-0 at home to Wales in the Kirin Cup . . . Antwerp beat Mechelen 9-8 in a penalty shoot-out after their Belgian Cup Final ends 2-2 after extra time . . . Sparta Prague beat Tatran Presov 2-1 in the Czechoslovakian Cup Final . . . AEK Athens are held 2-2 away by PAOK but win the Greek championship by three points . . . a most dramatic climax to the Spanish championship as Real Madrid squander a 2-0 lead and lose 3-2 at Tenerife, thus allowing Barcelona to pip them for the title thanks to a 2-0 home victory over Bilbao.

BANGLADESH: Four fans are killed and 50 injured in fighting after a National League match in Dhaka, when Abahani Sports Club beat old rivals Mohammedan Sporting 2-1

TURKEY: Galatasaray sign former Kaiserslautern coach Kalli Feldkamp.

JUNE 9 to JUNE 25

SEE JULY EDITION

FRIDAY, JUNE 26

ACTION: Denmark win the European Championship against all the odds, beating Germany 2-0 in the Final in Gothenburg. John Jensen and Kim Vilfort score the goals.

OBITUARY

TED FENTON: former West Ham player and manager, dies from injuries suffered in a car crash, aged 77.

ENZO MATTEUCCI: Internazionale's goalkeeper in the late 1950s, dies aged 58. Matteucci also played for Spal, Roma and Sampdoria and was briefly coach to Brescia.

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ITALY BY RINO LANDA

Spend, spend, spend

Milan lead the way in transfer frenzy

On the ball . . . Milan's new £13 million man, Gianluigi Lentini, in action for Italy against Germany in Turin last March.

NO DOUBT about the richest league in the world: Italian clubs have splashed out a record £235million in the domestic and international transfer market this summer.

Yet the two highest fees, successive world records, were paid for Italian players. Milan paid £13million for Torino forward Gianluigi Lentini and Juventus finally snatched Gianluca Vialli away from Sampdoria, for £12million.

The Lentini deal was the one which shook even Italian observers used to the extravagances of Calcio's mad midsummers. A fine player, indeed, but one of greater potential than achievement. Also, Lentini is not even a regular in the Italian national team. His reputation owes an awful lot to his decisive appearance as a match-winning substitute for Italy in their Turin friendly victory over Germany this past spring.

Mused

It's not as if Milan do not have a plethora of creative players already. The deal may yet backfire on them. If Lentini's four-year contract, worth £2.1million-a-year, does not incur envy among the squad then, as skipper Franco Baresi mused, "other clubs will try to make life even tougher for us just because of all the publicity and the fuss."

Torino president Gian Mauro Borsano spent an uncomfortable week ducking and diving. Torino's angry fans besieged and stoned the club offices while Borsano tried to make out first that the figures of the deal were nowhere near as high as reported, then tried to blame Lentini's alleged taste for the city night life as a reason for selling him. Finally it emerged that Borsano, under investigation for alleged business malpractices, was trying to sell his controlling stake in Torino.

Obviously bidders are easier to find when the debts have already been wiped out — as the Pontello family noted in disposing of Fiorentina immediately after selling Roberto Baggio to Juventus.

The consolation prize for Torino fans is the arrival of Uruguayan forward Carlos Aguilera from Genoa, who have recalled Igor Dobrovolski after two years in the loan wilderness, first in Spain with Castellon then in Switzerland with Servette.

Milan, of course, apart from Lentini, also paid out £10million for Jean-Pierre Papin and it will be fascinating to track how coach Fabio Capello juggles his overstuffed squad of superstars.

Juventus bought David Platt as well as Vialli and tried hard to persuade Sampdoria to sell not only their top striker but veteran centre-back Pietro Vierchowod as well. Sampdoria, it appears, were ready to do more business — particularly with Des Walker arriving — but Vierchowod said no, prompting a bid from Lazio.

The Roman club have sold Uruguayan striker Ruben Sosa to Inter to make way for Paul Gascoigne which means Inter will present a very different look this coming season. Sosa will be joined in attack by forgotten World Cup hero Toto Schillaci (from Juventus) while Igor Shalimov has arrived from Foggia for £8million, a record for a Russian.

Only Lothar Matthaus remains of Inter's German contingent, and he will miss most of the first half of the season while he recovers from knee ligament surgery. As for the other Germans, Jurgen Klinsmann appears bound for Paris Saint-Germain while European Championship skipper Andy Brehme has gone to Spain's Real Zaragoza.

Ordered

Fiorentina jumped on the Euro '92 bandwaggon by signing Brian Laudrup from Bayern Munich. They had already bought his best footballing friend, European Final rival Stefan Effenberg, from Bayern to replace Brazil's Dunga in midfield.

One Brazilian on the way in is Luis Oliveira, the Brazil-born Belgian international who has joined Cagliari from Anderlecht. He quickly found out all about Italian discipline when coach Carlo Mazzone ordered him to remove his ear-ring.

Brescia, to the consternation of their fans, have gone wholeheartedly for the Romanian look. Florin Raducioiu plays centre-forward with loan Sabau (ex-Feyenoord) and Gheorghe Hagi (ex-Real Madrid) in midfield. Coach, of course, is Mircea Lucescu.

The presence of so many foreigners will mean a host of squabbles once international calls come piling in — particularly with every country facing such busy World Cup qualifying programmes. Refusal to release players will prove costly. Foggia found that to their cost when UEFA fined them £22,000 for refusing to release Romanian defender Dan Petrescu for a European Championship qualifier last term.

On the television front, a group of Italian MPs gave notice of opposition to Silvio Berlusconi's plans to introduce pay-TV for soccer. But Berlusconi's financial power will continue to pose a threat to the broadcasting establishment. His Fininvest group makes no secret that it will challenge state-owned RAI's stranglehold on league coverage when the current contract expires next year.

On the move . . . Toto Schillaci (left) has joined Inter from Juventus while Brian Laudrup (above) has moved from Bayern to Fiorentina.

FRANCE BY ANDRE DUCLOS

UNHAPPILY, THAT'S LIFE FOR PLATINI

WHERE, with so much happening in French football, do we start?

Michel Platini vaulting out of the managerial chair to take over as supremo of a World Cup which has been awarded to France. Bernard Tapie, forced to resign from the Government after alleged improprieties, selling his stake in adidas to (at the time of writing) Pentland.

Nantes cast out of the First Division on economic grounds, then reinstated. Chris Waddle sold, in the end, not to Leeds United but to Sheffield Wednesday: and now Marseille will miss him!

Zvonimir Boban refusing to move to Marseille from Milan, after being on loan to Bari, thus costing Milan an extra £1 million on the Jean-Pierre Papin transfer fee.

By the time you read this, there will no doubt have been further earthquakes, not least over the succession to Platini as manager of the national side. How, in the end, should we assess his contribution? Had it only stopped short of the European Championship, any such judgement would be a great deal more positive than it has to be now.

Betrayed

There is a very real case for believing that in the last analysis Platini betrayed his trust, and went against his own true nature.

Having given us a national team known for attacking fervour, who could have lost a qualifier in Czechoslovakia because they insisted on pouring forward in waves, rather than going behind a Maginot Line in defence, Platini's nerve seemed to fail him in Sweden.

There is reason to believe, as the coppers say, that the defeat by England at Wembley earlier this year was behind it. Platini was among those, Graham Taylor and Eric Cantona being others, who insisted that it would have nothing to do with what would happen in Malmo in June. But the effect was only too evident.

Had he known from the start that England would be deploying a converted outside-left, Sinton, at right-back he would surely have "risked" choosing the lively Perez, or perhaps Vahirua, on the left flank. Instead, you could say that he bottled it, handing the initiative cravenly to England, and not deploying Perez until it was far too late.

Afterwards, he seemed to precede almost every sentence with the word, "malheureusement" — unhappily, unfortunately. This, alas, was how football was today. "Rien de faire". You presumably had to accept it for what it was. Gone were the days of Platini himself, Giresse, Tigana, Genghini. But how could he sustain that when, in a brilliant run to the finals, France had played so well and had won every game?

This will remain one of the great mysteries of his career, so dazzling in most respects.

A mystery perhaps compounded by the fact that Platini had evidently decided to give up his managerial job and take over as World Cup 1998 supremo whatever went on in Sweden. In that case, with a good chance that France would indeed grab the World Cup, why not take risks?

The new French season begins as always, illogically early with Bordeaux back in Division One after their financial scandals and forced relegation.

They have a couple of Brazilians to reinforce them, the gifted, adventurous Valdeir and Santos, both from Botafogo. They will not be in France until training is well under way, their club having qualified for the Brazilian Championship play-offs.

The saddest pre-season story was that of the excellent Polish midfielder, Ryszard Tarasiewicz, signed by Lens but tearing his cruciate ligaments during a training session.

Nantes, survived in Division One on appeal, helped by such friends as the local municipality and banks. It came as quite a shock to French football when Nantes, in the First Division since 1963, were oppressed by a debt of no less than 61.5 million francs.

Division Three, the hell that awaits clubs in financial turmoil, gaped in front of Nantes.

Released

Marseille have signed the midfielder, Eydelie. That swift, incisive forward, Youm, has been released. Bonalair has joined Auxerre. It won't now be easy for Nantes to stay afloat in the top division.

Shock waves are still emitted by the horrific catastrophe of the Furiani stadium in Bastia.

The club directors decided that were they to be allowed to stage their home matches there, they would erect a wall on the site of the ill-fated and ill-designed temporary stand, whose collapse caused the death of so many people.

Perez . . . should have played the whole game against England.

Stefan Sultana, of Hamrun Spartans, with the FA Trophy.

MALTA BY DOMENICO AQUILINA

Sultana shoots Hamrun to Cup double

HAMRUN had consolation for missing the Maltese championship by winning both the F.A. Trophy and the Super Cup.

Although they could finish only fourth in the title race, they beat the champions, Valletta, in both knockouts — thanks mainly to Stefan Sultana, the country's top scorer.

He scored two goals in the Trophy semi-final, won 2-0 against Floriana, added a penalty in the first match of the final, drawn 3-3, then added two more in the replay, won 2-1.

As if Valletta had not seen enough of Sultana, he scored twice more in the 2-0 Super Cup victory.

The drawn final tie was one of the most exciting in the island's history.

Sultana's penalty was the only goal of the first half, but after the interval Kristian Laferla equalised from another spot-kick, and Jesmond Zerafa put Valletta in front with 20 minutes to go.

There were only a few seconds left when Ivan Zammit made the score 2-2 against his old club, and although a Joe Zarb goal took Valletta in front again after five minutes of extra time, Joe Brincat brought it to 3-3 with 12 minutes remaining.

Hamrun made most of the running in the replay, scoring after 16 and 20 minutes. Zarb replied right on half-time, but Valletta could not break through again.

In the Super Cup, Hamrun played extremely well, although they had to wait 66 minutes for the inevitable Sultana goal. His second — 29th in all games — came in the last moments, a fitting finale to the season.

Yet Sultana did not win the Player of the Year award. That went to Valletta's international midfielder, Nicky Saliba.

DENMARK BY JIM HOLDEN

Lyngby win in dramatic finish

LYNGBY won the first Danish "superliga" in a dramatic last round of the season three days before Denmark began their astonishing surge to triumph in the European Championship.

They beat Copenhagen rivals B1903 1-0 away thanks to a 69th-minute goal from striker Torben Frank. B1903 needed a win to take the title but despite massive second-half pressure could not manage it, before a frantic 10,787 crowd.

It was perhaps fitting that Frank, Denmark's domestic player of the year, scored the winning goal before helping his country to glory in Sweden.

Lyngby's success was masterminded by one of the great players of the 1980s Danish Dynamite side, Klaus Berggreen.

He used the flexible 3-5-2 tactics learned from Sepp Piontek, which served the Danes so well in Sweden too. And Lyngby were proud to provide four of the 20-strong squad for the finals, including top scorer Henrik Larsen and Final substitute Claus Christiansen, who set up the second goal against Germany.

The versatile Christiansen is emblematic of Lyngby's success, a stopper for his club, yet able to fit in at both right and left wing-back for his country.

He explained their title success by saying: "We were the best organised side, especially in midfield and defence. Everybody in the team worked very hard for each other.

"Some people criticised us for not attacking enough, but that was unfair because we finished second top scorers."

Nevertheless, conceding just seven goals in 14 games was at the heart of victory. The club accept that they are likely to lose players to wealthier foreign clubs, and already Torben Frank has joined Lyon and Peter Nielsen has moved to Borussia Monchengladbach.

But they hope to keep 24-year-old Christiansen as the basis for next season's side.

Defeat to Lyngby was a double heartbreak for B1903, who a week earlier lost in the final of the Danish Cup — 3-0 to AGF, whose skipper, Kent Nielsen, another Euro hero, lifted the Cup only four months after returning home from Aston Villa.

They had the advantage of playing on their home pitch in Aarhus because the traditional venue, the Idraetsparken in Copenhagen, is still being rebuilt. A crowd of 20,000 saw AGF win the trophy for the eighth time, with goals from Bo Harder, Soren Andersen and Palle Sorensen.

What a final week in B1903's history. They have now merged with KB to become FC Kobenhavn, and will play under that name in next season's UEFA Cup, consolation for finishing second in the League.

The other side in the UEFA Cup, Frem, who ensured third place with a last-day victory — 3-1 at home to outgoing champions Brondby. Astonishingly, Brondby would have qualified for Europe if they had won 6-0, but defeat condemned them to second bottom place in the eight-team table.

That, in itself, proved the value of the new "superliga", keeping almost every issue open until the last round of games. That was reflected in a 15 per cent increase in attendances, which the DBU hope will be maintained following the glory in Sweden.

Next season's League is almost upon us, starting on August 12, the opening day pitching Lyngby against AGF. The two clubs promoted from the qualification League are both from Odense, B1909 and OB.

Jan's in favour again

FOR Sweden's sturdy stopper, Jan Eriksson, the 1992 Euro finals could not have gone better.

Two masterful goals at the Rasunda stadium helped him to silence fans who had called him "Judas" ever since his quarrelsome transfer from AIK to IFK Norrkoping last year.

Now Eriksson has signed a two-year contract with Kaiserslautern.

Swedes have traditionally done well at Kaiserslautern ever since the days of Ronnie Hellstrom and Roland Sandberg in the 1970s.

Eriksson had had trials with Newcastle — "They were looking for a striker and someone had told them that I was one," — and Spurs.

Even without him, Norrkoping are tied at the top of the Allsvenskan, with Trelleborg.

THE MAN IN THE HOT SEAT

Richard MOLLER NIELSEN

Aged 54 (born August 19, 1937)

Moller Nielsen took over as manager in the spring of 1990 in succession to long-serving and successful Sepp Piontek. He had played for OB Odense in the 1950s, playing centre-back for his club but winning his caps at right-back for Denmark.

In his second game, a 4-0 win over Norway, Moller Nielsen injured a knee so badly he never played again.

He turned to coaching with OB, moved to Esbjerg and Folin and back to OB in 1975. This time he stayed 13 years, leading them twice to the Danish championship.

Moller Nielsen later managed the national under-21 and Olympic teams. Failure to qualify originally for Euro '92 appeared to put his job in some jeopardy.

The road to SWEDEN

GROUP 4

12.09.90	N. Ireland v Yugoslavia	0-2
12.09.90	Faroe Islands v Austria	1-0
10.10.90	Denmark v Faroe Islands	4-1
17.10.90	N. Ireland v Denmark	1-1
31.10.90	Yugoslavia v Austria	4-1
14.11.90	Denmark v Yugoslavia	0-2
14.11.90	Austria v N. Ireland	0-0
27.03.91	Yugoslavia v N. Ireland	4-1
01.05.91	Yugoslavia v Denmark	1-2
01.05.91	N. Ireland v Faroe Islands	1-1
16.05.91	Yugoslavia v Faroe Islands	7-0
22.05.91	Austria v Faroe Islands	3-0
05.06.91	Denmark v Austria	2-1
11.09.91	Faroe Islands v N. Ireland	0-5
25.09.91	Faroe Islands v Denmark	0-4
09.10.91	Austria v Denmark	0-3
16.10.91	Faroe Islands v Yugoslavia	0-2
16.10.91	N. Ireland v Austria	2-1
13.11.91	Denmark v N. Ireland	2-1
13.11.91	Austria v Yugoslavia	0-2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Yugoslavia	8	7	0	1	24	4	14
Denmark	8	6	1	1	18	7	13
N. Ireland	8	2	3	3	11	11	7
Austria	8	1	1	6	6	14	3
Faroe Islands	8	1	1	6	3	26	3

SWEDEN BY PENTTI HIETANEN

Malmo are closing in, with Eriksson's international stopper partner, Patrik Andersson, giving five-star performances.

Malmo have two Patrik Anderssons, nicknamed Bjarred and Trelleborg.

Bjarred, boldly capped by Svensson, comes from a footballing family. Father Roy was an international and played for Malmo in the 1979 Champions' Cup final against Nottingham Forest.

Income

There are growing demands in Sweden to change the current league format by dropping the current championship stage of six clubs and returning to the traditional home-and-away basis with 14 or 16.

Lack of income is worrying more and more clubs, and traditional names such as AIK Stockholm, Djuurgarden, GAIS Gothenburg and Osters are deep in debt.

But good football still attracts fans. The Skane derby, Trelleborg and Malmo, was watched by 12,132 spectators.

Eriksson . . . moving from IFK Norrkoping to Kaiserslautern.

Strandli's a striking success

NORWAY BY SIGURD ODEGAARD

FRANK STRANDLI, a 19-year-old striker with Start Kristiansand, is the talk of Norwegian football.

He made a good impression last season, particularly in the Under-23 win over Italy, and began this term with four goals in the opening game.

Strandli spent some weeks with Leeds last autumn and makes no secret of his ambition to join them. English football would suit him well, and as long as he keeps on knocking in those goals a future abroad looks probable.

His goals are making Start a serious contender for the League title.

When his partner up front, Tor "Totto" Dahlum, decided to join Rosenborg just a short time after Pal Lydersen left for Arsenal, few expected Start to fight for honours. But shrewd coach Brede Skistad proved everyone wrong and the team continue to progress.

Another good prospect and fellow international, Erik Mykland, has had a tremendous start to the season.

Insufficient

Despite an economic scandal concerning insufficient tax payments, Rosenborg are at the top of the table, with Bjornebye and Leonhardsen looking particularly good.

Earlier this season an interesting book about the club by Ingar Skrede, was published.

He lived with players and officials for the whole of the last season and gave an unvarnished account of Rosenborg's methods.

Lillestrom have been the surprise of the season so far. Coach Ivar Hoff was drafted in when Tom Lund decided to quit more than a year ago.

Hoff's recipe has certainly given the desired results so far.

Jan Ove Pedersen has been a revelation in midfield and deservedly won full international honours.

The national team are on the verge of starting their bid for a place in the 1994 World Cup.

England's demise in the European Championship has not gone unnoticed, and the Norwegians fancy their chances for their first qualifying match.

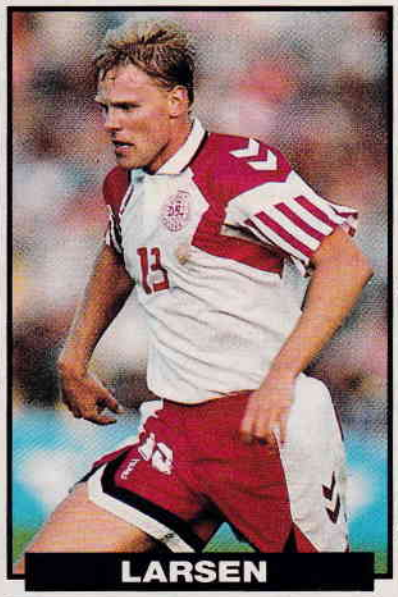
The optimism that the Danish and Swedish success brought about during the championships will hopefully rub off on the Norwegian players as well, and Egil Olsen's mixture of foreign-based players with the best from the country's national league looks quite impressive.

● Here, as promised, are two replacement pages for the MasterCard Guide to Euro '92 issued free with the June edition. Simply cut out or copy this page and insert it into the booklet instead of Yugoslavia.

Qualifying round GOALSCORERS

GOALS	PLAYER
6	Bent **CHRISTENSEN**
4	Flemming **POVLSEN**
2	Michael **LAUDRUP**
1	Jan **BARTRAM**
1	Kim **CHRISTOFTE**
1	Lars **ELSTRUP**
1	Frank **PINGEL**
1	Kim **VILFORT**

LAUDRUP



LARSEN

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP RECORD

1960	First round
1964	Fourth
1968	First round
1972	First round
1976	First round
1980	First round
1984	Semi-finals
1988	Finals, first round

GROUP 1 DENMARK SQUAD

PLAYER	CLUB	BORN	CAPS
Peter **SCHMEICHEL**	Manchester Utd (Eng)	18.11.63	47
Mogens **KROGH**	Brondby	31.10.63	1
John **SIVEBAEK**	Monaco (Fra)	25.10.61	77
Kent **NIELSEN**	AGF Arhus	28.12.61	50
Lars **OLSEN**	Trabzonspor (Tur)	02.02.61	57
Torben **PIECHNIK**	B1903	21.05.63	4
Henrik **ANDERSEN**	Koln (Ger)	07.05.65	25
Kim **CHRISTOFTE**	Brondby	M 11	
John **JENSEN**	Brondby	03.05.65	43
Johnny **MOLBY**	Velje	04.02.69	14
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GERMANY, SWITZERLAND AND AUSTRIA BY ARTHUR ROTMIL

The hunt is on

Vogts seeks new talent to fit the old fashion

GERMANY have begun rebuilding their ageing national side for the 1994 World Cup, while the inquests are still going on into the failure to win the European Championship.

The debates revolve inevitably around team selection and tactics, for which manager Berti Vogts accepts full responsibility. In defence of Vogts, however, he was confronted with several problems which were difficult to solve.

First he lost his inspirational captain and midfield dynamo Lothar Matthaus, with torn ligaments. His successor as captain, Rudi Voller — 43 goals in 83 internationals — broke an arm in the first match.

In the second, Stefan Reuter and Guido Buchwald suffered head injuries and were sorely missed in the 3-1 defeat by Holland.

Next, sweeper Manfred Binz and midfielders Thomas Doll and Andy Moller inexplicably lost form and had to be replaced. Some players, too, were unsettled over transfer speculation.

Vogts was particularly cross with Moller, saying: "He was my greatest disappointment. I had such high hopes that he would be the chief in midfield.

"I am not unhappy about second place, but wish that some of the players had reached their normal form. Then we could have won the title. Our defence was strangely uncertain and this lack of security at the back affected the rest of the team."

Sepp Herberger, Helmut Schoen, Jupp Derwall and Franz Beckenbauer, who preceded Vogts, all won either the World Cup, the European Championship, or both. The Germans have the best record of any nation. They are the only country to have reached six World Cup Finals, winning three, and the only nation to play in four European Championship Finals, winning two.

Vogts has been criticised for his sometimes defensive tactics, but his position is secure at least to 1994. Now, after four defeats since he took over after the 1990 World Cup he is under greater scrutiny than perhaps any German manager in postwar years. He is likely to stick with 1-2-5-2, with the sweeper playing behind two markers in defence, five men in midfield and two strikers, as he plans to win the World Cup for a record fourth time.

The players will miss the competitive involvement, for as holders and automatic qualifiers they will not play preliminary matches. He also has indicated that the squad will be rebuilt and rejuvenated. In any case Voller has announced his retirement from the international scene, and will make his farewell appearance on October 14, against Mexico.

Earlier, on September 9 in Copenhagen, Vogts will make several changes. "Some of the established stars will not be picked and they won't like it," he warns.

Possible

New men are sought for the full-back positions, while keeper Bodo Illgner probably will sit on the bench. Reuter, Binz and Helmer vie for the position of libero. Brehme has most likely played his last international, while Buchwald also may be too old for America and so will Matthaus, even if he fully recovers.

Among possible newcomers, Vogts mentions such talented midfielders as Andy Buck (VfB Stuttgart), clubmate Maurizio Gaudino, Uwe Scherr (Kaiserslautern), his team colleague Marco Haber, and Ralf Weber (Eintracht Frankfurt).

There has been vast activity in the transfer market.

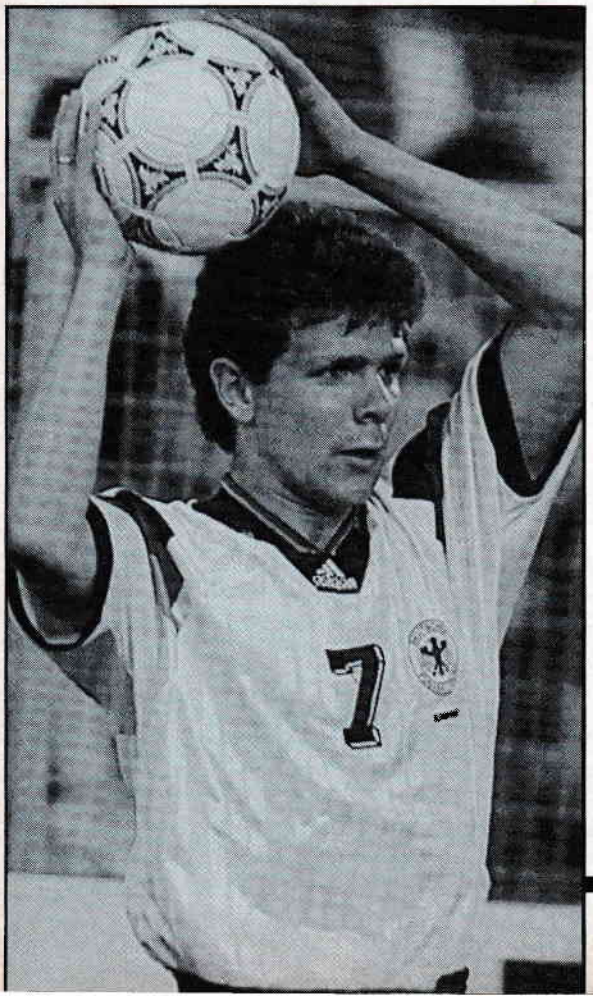
Bayern Munich sold Danish striker Brian Laudrup to Fiorentina, and bought Helmer from Borussia Dortmund and Brazilian defender Jorginho from Bayer Leverkusen.

Dortmund signed Reuter from Juventus and champions Stuttgart hired Swiss international Adrian Knup from Lucerne.

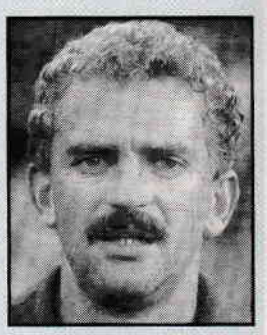
Two more Danes will enrich the Bundesliga: Kim Christofte from Brondby joined Koln, and Johnny Molby (cousin of Liverpool's Jan Molby) moved from Vejle to Borussia Monchengladbach.

Austrian midfielder Andy Herzog signed for Cup-winners Cup-holders Werder Bremen.

Left out . . . Andy Moller inexplicably lost form.



Double-winner Prohaska is sacked



THE most exciting finish to a championship in Austrian history, when three clubs climbed jointly to the top and FK Austria won the title on goal difference, left two prominent managerial casualties.

What made the finale special was the fact that the last match of the season was between the leading clubs, FK Austria and Austria Salzburg. The visitors were supported by 10,000 fans who made the journey to Vienna. That was an astonishing figure for Austrian football, which was obviously pronounced dead prematurely.

FK Austria beat Admira Wacker in the Cup Final to complete a double, yet in the hour of triumph team manager Herbert Prohaska (above), one of Austria's all-time greats, was shown the door.

Following the sudden death of FK president Walter Joschi, the club were shaken by behind-the-scenes intrigues.

The campaign against Prohaska intensified and even the intervention of the national team chief, "living legend" Ernst Happel, could not save him.

A similar fate befell another former star player, Hans Krankl, whose three years in charge of Rapid were a litany of missed opportunities.

After Rapid failed to gain even a UEFA Cup place and the unsuccessful Krankl criticised the constantly-arguing club officials in a television interview, his departure became inevitable.

His successor is another controversial character, "Gustl" Starek, the "enfant terrible" among Austrian coaches.

A slight change for the better

DESPITE the recession and the mainly pessimistic forecasts, Swiss football reported some positive tendencies.

The 56 games in last season's championship play-offs were watched by 460,750 spectators, an average of 8,227.

This was an increase of 43,000 on the previous term, although the best-supported club, Lucerne (62,500) were demoted to the promotion/relegation pool.

Of the six participants in play-offs last year, only Lausanne reported a drop in attendances — 17,900 supporters fewer than the season before.

The remaining five clubs all registered a rise in gates compared with 1990-91 — Grasshoppers 5,800, Xamax Neuchatel 8,000, Servette 14,000, Sion 16,500 and Young Boys 19,200.

Only 132 yellow cards were shown, 23 fewer than last term, but nine players were sent off compared with three.

The eight finalists used 156 players — Lausanne, Xamax and Zurich 21 each, champions Sion the fewest, 17. Only ten players were ever-present in the 14 matches.

The top scorer was Miklos Molnar, who despite his Hungarian name is Danish. He hit 18 goals for Servette, and clubmate Igor Dobrovolski scored 15.

Dobrovolski has had a remarkable career. He was born in the Ukraine, but rejected the biggest club, Kiev Dynamo, and signed to Moscow Dynamo. After the 1990 World Cup he was transferred to Genoa, but they already had a full complement of foreigners so they loaned him to Spanish club Castellon.

Last year he was passed on to Servette, but will at last start with Genoa in the new season.

"I can hardly wait," he says. "Italian football is the shop window for all stars, and that is where I want to be."

SPAIN BY GRAHAM TURNER

Floro in as Real fail again

WHILE the Danes were nursing their European Championship hangover the Spaniards finally wrapped up their season with an epic final of the Copa del Rey which left Real Madrid with a Danish-sized headache, but for all the wrong reasons.

Royal approval . . . King Juan Carlos and Queen Sophia applaud as the Atletico Madrid captain, Paulo Futre, holds up several kilogrammes of silverware, after the 2-0 defeat of Real Madrid.

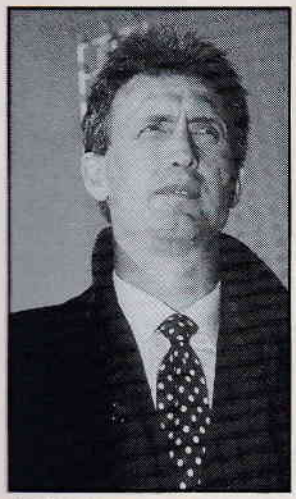
The match against local enemies Atletico could have been scripted as the ultimate humiliation in a season when every time they seemed to have successfully unfurled their expensive umbrella, the winds of fortune turned it inside-out.

Leo Beenhakker's Real team looked to have recovered from the blow of losing the League to Barcelona. In the semi-finals they comfortably beat Sporting 2-1 in Gijon and 5-2 in Madrid, while Atletico looked unimpressive in their 3-1 aggregate win over Deportivo La Coruna.

The luck of the draw then gave Real home advantage in a final played in the Bernabeu Stadium, where capacity was reduced to 62,000 and maximum-risk security measures kept incidents to a minimum.

The choice of venue was providential: a few days later, tests confirmed that many of the concrete beams in Atletico's Manzanares stadium were suffering from aluminosis and the schedule of rock concerts for this summer was cancelled.

Atletico are now working against the clock to replace the beams before the new season, and Real have offered to loan them Bernabeu if necessary.



Back again . . . Benito Floro.

There were no such friendly gestures during the Cup Final. Nine players were booked, and two superb goals gave Atletico the 2-0 victory which condemned Real to their second consecutive year without a trophy.

Only seven minutes had passed when the visitors were awarded a free-kick 25 metres out, and Bernd Schuster — "Anything Hassler can do I can do better" — struck a wonderful shot past Buyo's right hand.

After 28 minutes Futre outpaced Chendo and hit a searing shot into the roof of the net.

The two-goal advantage did justice to Atletico's first-half display, but Real fought back and were awarded a penalty in the 65th minute. Michel, however, failed to beat Abel, and effectively summarised a wretched season which went badly astray as soon as Raddy Antic was sacked.

The deep feeling of crisis produced rapid reactions. Beenhakker was persuaded to forget his three-year contract. Gheorghe Hagi, who limped off after 10 minutes of the final, was sold to Brescia.

Chilean striker Ivan Zamorano was signed for £3m from Sevilla along with central defender Nando, who cost the same price in a complex operation. Sevilla had a £2.2m buy-back clause in their agreement with Barcelona, which they exercised just before the deadline. They then sold him at a handsome profit to Real.

Gamble

The new manager, Benito Floro, represents another gamble. He is a 40-year-old whose First Division experience boils down to one successful season at Albacete. His European c.v. is blank.

He has arrived at Bernabeu with two assistants, Carcelen and Portoles, plus a psychiatrist. His first moves were to slice three days off the players' holidays; cancel the pre-season training camp in Belgium; and warn them that his methods will be "like doing your military service".

Real's president, Ramon Mendoza, increasingly harassed by growing opposition, is hoping the target practice will work.

Floro is by no means the only managerial change. The most striking appointment is that of Carlos Bilardo, the 54-year-old Argentine, at Sevilla. He is returning to the dug-out two years after announcing his retirement and, as he puts it, is "disgusted by the way I was excluded from the project of setting up a sports school in Buenos Aires".

Bilardo has one of his 1986 World Cup winners as assistant: Jose Luis Brown, once with Real Murcia.

They, incidentally, were the only club who failed to meet the legal deadline for conversion into a limited company, and were therefore relegated to Division 2B.

Malaga, in the First Division in 1990 but also relegated to 2B, have gone out of existence.

The race to subscribe share capital produced pantomime scenes on the last day. The Atletico Madrid president, Jesus Gil, produced the goods ten minutes before the midnight deadline, having mortgaged his ranch, his fighting bulls and his racehorses in the process.

Jose Maria Ruiz Mateos, president of newly-promoted Rayo Vallecano, turned up at 11.55 wearing dressing-gown and slippers to put £3.6m on the table. Wine tycoon Marcos Eguizabal showed he was not short of bottle by pouring £2.3m into Rioja-based Logrones.

Had these benefactors not produced the pesetas, their clubs would have been relegated to semi-pro soccer.

Agreeable

In the meantime the play-offs had produced an as-you-were situation, with First Division Cadiz beating Figueras and Deportivo la Coruna also retaining their status by beating Betis, then plunging into the market and pulling off the first coup of the summer by signing Jose Roberto Gama de Oliveira, alias Bebeto, assuming nothing else goes wrong.

Flamengo and Deportivo agreed terms, not realising that the 28-year-old Brazilian was, off his own bat, negotiating with Borussia Dortmund. According to the Spanish club, however, the deal is done and dusted.

The Federation president, Angel Villar, has been elected to the UEFA Executive Committee — the first Spanish representative for 18 years — and has been re-elected for a further term of four years at the helm of the domestic game.

He celebrated by moving Vicente Miera upstairs as "co-ordinator" and appointing Javier Clemente as national team manager.

Real sad . . . Michel falls in a vain attempt to deprive Atletico's Soler of possession.

HOLLAND BY JAAP DE GROOT

Scouts dive in again

DURING the aftermath of a successful international season Dutch football suffered one expected and one unexpected blow.

After the triumph of Ajax in the UEFA Cup, the Dutch influenced successes of Barcelona (winner of the Champions' Cup and Spanish League) and Milan (unbeaten League champions of Italy) and the good impression the national squad left at Euro '92, it was clear that foreign countries would try to pump the Dutch League dry again.

A predictable fate of a small state, where top sport is organised on a much smaller scale than countries like Italy, Spain, France, Germany and France. So at all levels Dutch teams had to suffer the financial power of other European teams.

Ajax lost two internationals (Aron Winter to Lazio and John Van't Schip to Genoa), and "average" clubs such as FC Volendam (Elroy Kromheer) and RKC Waalwijk (Harry Decheiver) were surprised when the Scottish club Motherwell and Servette from Switzerland both signed one of their young players.

Meanwhile, prestigious clubs such as Ajax, PSV and Feyenoord were capable only of hanging on to the rest of their players and so Holland lacked a million-pound transfer that would create a snowball effect, influencing several clubs in a financially positive way.

Willem II Tilburg received 1.2 million dollars from Ajax, who replaced right-winger Van't Schip with the 19-year-old Marc Overmars. For the rest there were no spectacular actions.

This situation proves again that Holland have to use all their creativity to keep their status of a great football country, which they have had since their first international success in 1970, when Feyenoord won the Champions' Cup.

Two of the Dutch team in the European Championship finals have now retired from international football.

Goalkeeper Hans Van Breukelen and defender Adri Van Tiggelen are both 35 and feel that enough is enough, although they will continue to play for their club, PSV.

Van Breukelen gained 73 caps and Van Tiggelen 56, although he did not make his debut until he was nearly 27.

PSV will need them both, having lost Belgian full-back Eric Gerets, who has retired, and central defender Stan Valckx, who has followed Bobby Robson to Sporting Lisbon.

Wageningen, who were in the Premier Division only a decade ago, and VCV Zeeland, professionals for only two seasons, have gone bankrupt.

Fans are naturally sad and many clubs are furious with Dutch FA spokesman Rob de Leede, who told a newspaper he would be quite happy to see some teams disappear, because this would create room in the League programme.

Goodbye Holland . . . Van't Schip has joined Genoa.

Goodbye Holland . . . Winter has joined Lazio.

OK for Olympiakos . . . Batista is on the move.

GREECE BY LOU ECONOMOPOULOS

Stelios stays on the beach

AEK ATHENS, defending champions in Greece, are trying to strengthen their squad in the hope of keeping the title and having a good run in the Champions' Cup — where they face APOEL of Cyprus in the first round.

The president, Dimitris Melissanidis, says: "We want AEK to be a top European club" — and he is backing coach Dusan Bayevich in his search for newcomers.

Melissanidis is surprised that some of last season's squad do not want to continue, and adds: "Something is wrong at administration level. We will try to fix it."

Daniel Batista, one of last season's big successes, has joined Olympiakos, and another top player, Stelios Manolas, may have had his last game for the club. He says he does not want to play for AEK again, preferring life on the island of Naxos.

Cup-winners' Olympiakos, under coach Oleg Blokhin, signed George Mitsibonas from PAOK Salonika in addition to Batista, and drew 2,000 fans to their first public training session for the new season.

They face Liechtenstein's Vaduz or Ukraine's Odessa in the first round of the Cup-winners' Cup — a tie which should prove straightforward for them.

There was almost as big a turnout at Panathinaikos, where Ivica Osim is the new coach. President George Vardinoyannis told the players: "What he says goes. Anyone who disagrees should leave now."

Panathinaikos and PAOK will play in the UEFA Cup in the new season, the former against Electroputere Craiova of Romania, the latter against Paris St Germain.

PAOK have signed eight newcomers, all under the age of 23, and are hoping to recruit Manolas as well, if they can persuade him to leave his adopted island.

CYPRUS BY LAKIS AVRAAMIDES

Big Euro gates ahead

APOEL, Apollon and Anorthosis, the clubs representing Cyprus in Europe, are well pleased with the draw, even though they cannot realistically expect to make progress.

All three have been paired with very attractive opposition, and expect bumper gate receipts from the home ties.

Greek champions AEK of Athens are APOEL's opponents, Apollon meet Liverpool in the Cup-winners' Cup, and Anorthosis face Juventus in the UEFA Cup.

Although skipper Koulis Pantziaris has retired, APOEL have a good replacement in Nicos Charalambous, signed from Olympiakos for around 100,000 American dollars.

Apollon welcome back Angelos Tsolakis and Christos Iosiphides, fit again after lengthy injuries, and have signed Milenko Spoliarec from OFK Belgrade.

Nigerian striker Mike Ombikou has left Anorthosis, joining Feyenoord of Rotterdam for $400,000, but a lot of that fee has been spent on obtaining a replacement, Dimitris Ashiotis of Olympiakos.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND BY SEAN CREEDON

FAI in the money

JACK CHARLTON, the Republic of Ireland's national team manager, does not come cheaply.

He and his assistant, Maurice Setters, cost the FAI £117,000 in salary and expenses last year.

Not that there are any complaints. The FAI — in the red when Charlton took over six years ago — now have assets of some £2 million.

Middlesbrough defender Alan Kernaghan (right) has been included in Charlton's squad for the game against Manchester United at Lansdowne Road on Sunday August 9. This is Kernaghan's first call-up following his declaration for the Republic earlier this year.

Proceeds from the game will go to the Dublin Athletic Union League, who are building a floodlit all-weather pitch at their ground near Dublin Airport.

The FAI are close to signing a deal for a new all-seater stadium in Dublin.

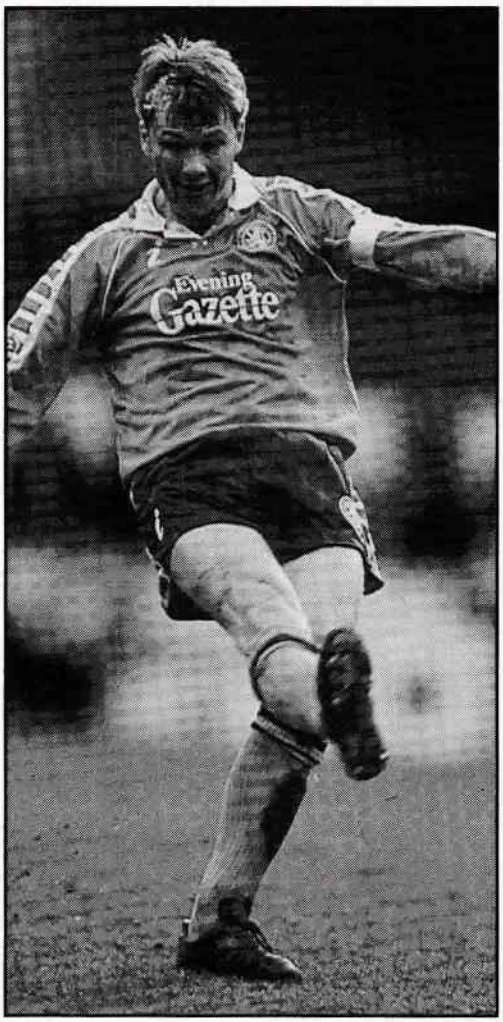
Earlier this year FAI officials visited Copenhagen and were very impressed with the new business-backed stadium built there.

The Bord Gais League of Ireland, starting on August 30, has a new format. On completion of two rounds the clubs will be divided into two groups of six, and they will then play each other to decide winners and relegation.

St Patrick's Athletic, who won the League of Ireland Premier Division title two seasons ago, almost folded during the summer.

They were rescued by a new consortium who hope to take the club back to their original home at Richmond Park, Inchicore. St. Patrick's are the sixth League of Ireland club in recent years to be saved by new backers.

Manager John Cleary has left St James' Gate for Kilkenny City. Fran Gavin, a former player with "The Gate" has been promoted to manager with his father's blessing. His father Frank, a widower, was recently ordained a priest.



PORTUGAL BY ALBERTO DA SILVA

Fixtures work in favour of Robson

PORTUGAL is second to none for football excitement when there is no football.

The country is full of soccer talk during the close season — talk of new managers, new players, prospects for the coming season, the draws for the European tournaments and other topics.

The newspapers have a high old time, and rarely have a better "beano" than when Bobby Robson took over at Sporting Lisbon.

Former England manager Robson was packing at his home in Ipswich when the Portuguese posse of writers and photographers arrived. He had to show them his house, his garden, his pictures, his souvenirs. He had to pose in suit and in shorts.

Only then did fans really believe he was on his way.

A party of journalists travelled with him, and the airport was bulging with fans, directors, media and assorted hangers-on when at last he arrived.

Thinking

After the speeches, Robson was whisked away to his hotel — the directors have not yet found him a house — and at last he had some time to relax.

Robson, always courteous, had answered "No problem" to any awkward questions, but there ARE problems at Sporting.

Some players have been sold and others bought since he accepted the job. He has to get the squad thinking and acting his way, quickly, for the enthusiasm in Lisbon is such that victory, only victory, will be acceptable once the season starts on August 23.

Before then Robson will have returned to England for friendlies at Swindon and Newcastle.

Fortunately for him, the fixture list has been kind. Tirsense should not trouble Sporting on the opening day, and the next six games do not appear too difficult, either.

After that, Robson faces the Big Two in successive home matches — Benfica first, then Porto.

By then, his players might just have built up the strength and arrogance they need if they are to make a realistic challenge.

TADJIKISTAN BY VLADIMIR KALINKOVIC

Deals leave Pamir shorn of stars

JUST as Tadjikistan, one of the former Soviet republics, were offered the prospect of provincial FIFA membership later this year, so many of the best players left the state.

Tadjikistan, southernmost republic of the old Soviet Union, have only one club who played in the Soviet Supreme League — Pamir of Dushanbe, promoted in 1989 with a team including three Zambian internationals, Mvanza, Chansa and Makinka.

In the following year Pamir beat Moscow Spartak 5-1.

Not surprisingly, Pamir led the present 12-club Tadjikistan First Division, winning their first seven games and averaging 4.57 goals per match.

Equally unsurprisingly, such form led to massed raids by scouts from other clubs, with the result that most of the top players moved. Leading striker Mukhsin Mukhamadiev went to Lok. Moscow, with Yuri Baturenko, Vasili Postnov and Khakim Fuzailov.

Andrei Manannikov and Vazgen Manasian are now with Zenit St. Petersburg, Rashid Rakhimov plays for Moscow Spartak, and Anatoli Volovodenko moved to Uralmash of Ekaterinburg.

The club also may lose Sergei Mandreko, winner of four caps for the CIS. He is wanted by CSKA and by two German clubs.

● THE first Moldova Cup Final brought a surprise result, with league leaders Tiligul of Tiraspol being beaten 5-0 by Budjak Komrate.

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RUSSIA BY VICTOR GUSEV

Sadyrin takes over at last

BACK IN 1964 Soviet team manager Konstantin Beskov was sacked on the team's return from Spain, where they had won "only" the silver medal at the European Championship.

By those standards Anatoli Byshovets, manager of the CIS team who failed to make the semi-finals in Sweden, should have been proclaimed an enemy of the people.

In the new society which is trying to look democratic, however, Byshovets's only punishment was not getting his name on the list of the Russian national coach candidates. Instead he joined "the army of unemployed", as he puts it, looking for a good foreign offer.

The race to become the first manager of the reborn Russian team started even before the FIFA decision to grant Russia the former Soviet place in international football in general, and the 1994 World Cup qualifiers in particular.

So the way was clear for the appointment of CSKA manager Pavel Sadyrin. The two other candidates, Yuri Syomin (Lokomotiv Moscow) and Valeri Gazzayev (Moscow Dynamo), lacked both prestige and experience.

Sadyrin, who will be 50 in September, had been a player with Zenit Leningrad. He became coach there in 1978, and took the club to an unexpected championship triumph.

In 1985 he was enlisted by the Red Army to save CSKA from the shame of getting stuck in the Second Division. Sadyrin managed to lift the team's morale, made important tactical chances, won promotion in the same year, and topped the League in 1990.

At that moment he was asked to become the Soviet national coach but refused, saying that he had a moral obligation to make the Army team into national champions, CSKA players reciprocated by declining all foreign offers and last year they won both League and Cup.

Sadyrin does not speak highly of players who choose to sign lucrative contracts abroad rather than keep playing at home. He is expected to invite many young "unspoiled" players to the national team, scheduled to play their first World Cup qualifying game on September 23 in Yugoslavia, if possible.

Before then the Russians face Mexico in Moscow, and they also have fixtures against Iceland (Oct 14) and Luxembourg (Oct 28).

The Russian League began again after a six-week break, and CSKA and Spartak soon went to the top of their respective groups.

Taken

While Sadyrin is still deciding on a squad, the Ukrainians have played two internationals, losing 3-1 to Hungary at home and drawing 0-0 with the US in New Jersey.

After Valeri Lobanovski, former Soviet — and now United Arab Emirates — national manager, finally said "no" to the Ukrainian offer, the job was taken temporarily by Victor Prokopenko, 48-year-old coach of Chernomorets Odessa.

Some of his team are former Soviet national, Olympic and youth team members.

Estonia's 2-1 defeat by Latvia on July 10 was the first time they had lost an international for 52 years, 10 months and 12 days. Latvia had had an unbeaten run of 51 years seven months and 20 days, and Lithuania one of 52-8-13.

T he reason for the longevity was the fact that all three nations had spent half a century under Soviet rule, but had not lost their FIFA membership even though they had not played any games.

HUNGARY BY BRIAN O'SULLIVAN

Jenei is facing problems in plenty

HUNGARY made the worst possible start to their World Cup campaign — a 2-1 defeat by Iceland in Budapest.

They scored through Kalman Kovacs after only two minutes, missed countless chances up until half-time, and conceded two goals in the second half, when they lost direction, played in a very un-Hungarian manner, and left officials, not just fans, with long faces.

This sobering setback could not, however, deflate Hungary's manager, Emmerich Jenei, formerly in charge of Romania, who exuded an optimistic air some days later.

"The idea was to get a goal as soon as possible, and we scored after two minutes." he said.

"If we'd got another goal or two the match would have been over. But this defeat makes our position difficult.

"There was a lack of time to prepare, and then the players got desperate and nervous. They are not as good, physically. To be able to give long passes and then run is a combative approach and needs individual ability.

"Perhaps the team cannot counter-attack very well. There are no defensive players who can form a rock in their own half upon which to establish a counter-attacking approach. They are not strong enough as football personalities.

"My job is difficult and, unfortunately, in spite of watching the First Division matches, it is hard to find outstanding players to add to the national team. There are a few young talents, I follow their careers carefully, but there is not an outstanding personality to be seen."

Jenei added: "The mentality should be changed, generally, in the football life, in the clubs. I don't want to underestimate their work but if they achieve something small they become too satisfied.

"The most important guide is how far a team can progress in the European club competitions. Winning the championship is not enough. You have to do more. It is not by chance that the Hungarian clubs don't go very far.

"The strength of a country's football lies in how their teams fare in Europe. Then the national team can benefit."

That view is brought home by the reduced entry of Hungarian clubs from four to three, for the European competitions this season — Ferencvaros as Champions, Cup-winners Ujpest, and Vac as the sole UEFA Cup side.

They will face Slovan Bratislava, Parma and Groningen respectively.

Kispest-Honved's new bosses, Belgian entrepreneur Louis de Vries and former international Lazslo Balint, made their first cut the deepest: not renewing the contract of manager Dr Gyorgy Mezey, the best brain in the Hungarian game. But the disenchanted doctor was not altogether angry about the decision.

Ferenc Bene, another former international, will take charge of his old club, Ujpest, for one season, replacing Ferenc Kovacs, while Karoly Csapo, of more recent playing vintage, is back at his old ground, Tatabanya, unfortunately relegated, after replacing Gyula Rakosi.

Diosgyor, incorrectly listed in last month's column as being relegated, retained their Division One status after a play-off. Only three — Haladas, Tatabanya and Zalaegerszeg — went down, to be replaced by Csepel and Bekescsaba, both automatically promoted, and Nyiregyhaza, via the play-offs.

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Third Division 0891 168 674

Scottish Leagues 0891 168 675

GM Vauxhall Conference 0891 168 676

European 0891 168 677

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TURKEY BY HASAN CEMALI

TV to pay for transfers

A PRIVATE television company, Kanal 6, have offered Fenerbahce two million US dollars for rights to transmit their matches live next season.

According to one of the Kanal 6 directors, they also will underwrite the cost of three signings, probably from South America. Transmissions are due to start in September.

There is big money in Turkish soccer just now, and Fenerbahce — managed by Joszef Venglos — are buying big.

One signing, 22-year-old Jeny Novak from Partizan Belgrade, cost 1.6 million German marks, and gets a third of it for himself.

Miroslav Tanjga from Red Star Belgrade cost 700,000 US dollars for a two-year contract, and he is approaching 30.

Galatasary have signed Falco Gotz from Koln, who receives 500,000 marks and the receipts from home and away games with the Turkish club. Gotz, 30, takes 300,000 marks over two years.

Elvir Belic, a Muslim, has struck gold after fleeing Red Star Belgrade as a refugee. He reached Galatasary after a stop in Paris, and has signed for three years, at a cost of one million marks.

Trabzonspor have recruited former Mechelen manager George Leekens. He follows another Belgian, Urbain Braems, who helped the club win the Turkish Cup last season.

Big money . . . Tanjga joins Fenerbahce.

Iron foot marches on

"I would have walked to Turin"

BY RAY **DELLA PIETRA**

ELFRIDE KOHLER dreamed of a banker's career for Jurgen, the youngest and now the most famous of her four sons. Indeed, Jurgen decided to embark on a motor-mechanic apprenticeship before his association with Klaus Schlappner, then the coach of German club, Waldhof Mannheim.

Unfortunately for Europe's top strikers, Schlappner firmly shut the bonnet on Kohler's initial occupation and masterminded his development in football.

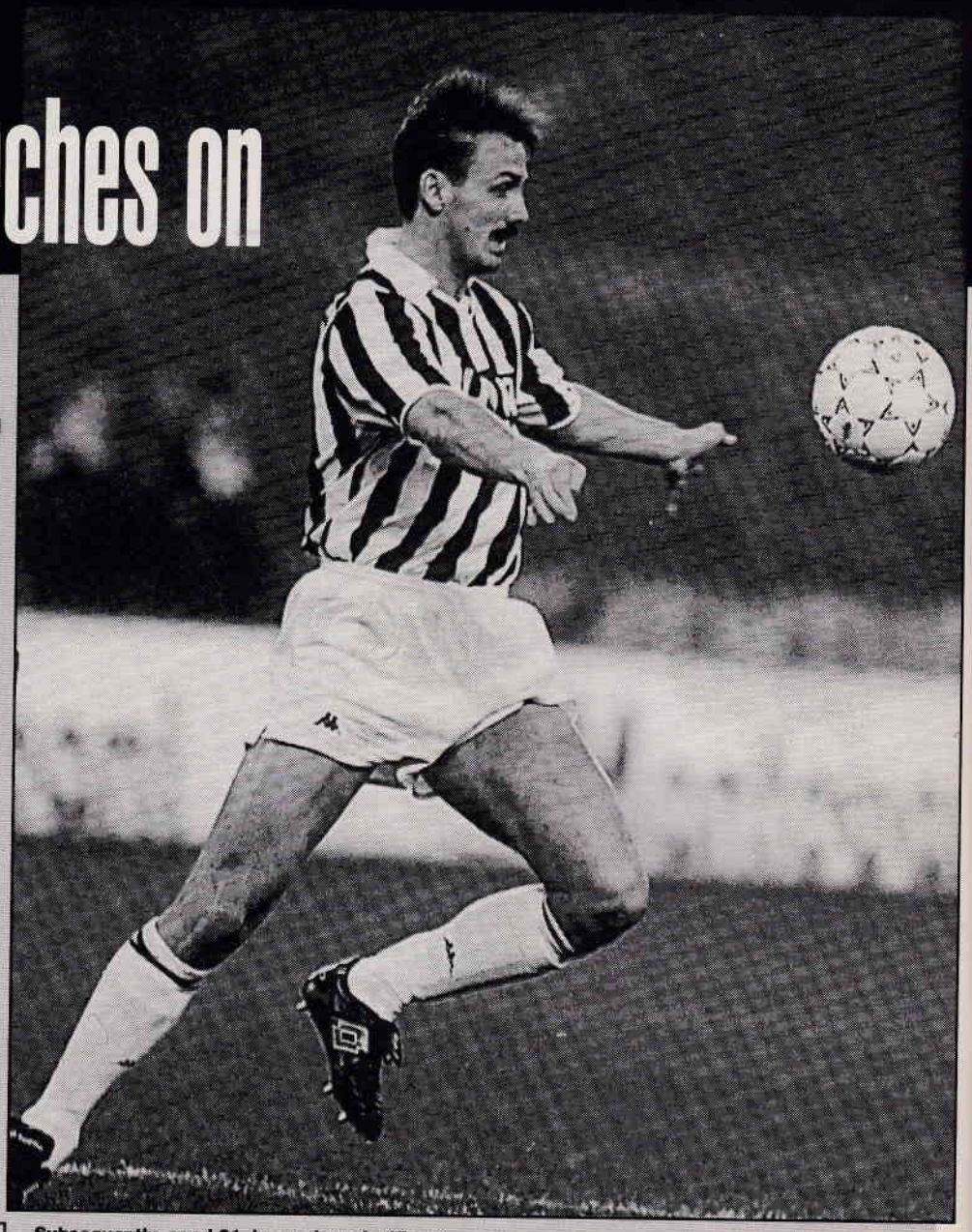
Kohler's tough demeanor on the field of play led to a rather misleading nick-name, Eisen Fuss — Iron Foot, resembling a character from a James Bond movie. He readily defies the critics who insinuated that perhaps his marking sometimes passed the boundary of legality.

"In eight years as a professional I have never been sent off, nor has any opponent been seriously injured," he says. "It's obvious that in my position knocks are given and received, but I never go over the top."

Kohler, now with Juventus, assumes a completely different role off the field. According to his wife, Esther, he is calm and gentle.

He is also extremely superstitious. One of the many examples regarding his pre-match rituals includes munching three biscuits, washed down by a cup of coffee, one hour before kick-off.

Kohler first played in the Bundesliga in 1984, at 18, and within a year he had represented his level. Franz Beckenbauer summoned him to the full international squad for the warm-up games leading to the Mexico World Cup in 1986.



Schlappner . . . was like a father to Kohler

Subsequently, aged 21, he made a significant transfer from Mannheim to Koln — a journey that separated him from Klaus Schlappner after three character-building years.

Kohler lost his natural father soon after his birth, so Schlappner's presence grew in consequence. "Klaus was like a father to me," says Kohler. "He helped me mature professionally and as a person. I owe him so much."

Udo Lattek replaced Schlappner, and his coaching helped Kohler to become a fixture in the national team. In Lattek's words, he became "the best stopper in the world."

After two seasons with Koln, he was on the move again in 1989 — to Bayern Munich. That followed the 1988 European Championship, the biggest disappointment in Kohler's career.

He insists the trophy was theirs for the taking, despite Holland's memorable victory.

Two triumphant years with Bayern concluded with a £4 million transfer to Italy. Giovanni Trapattoni's return to Juventus from Internazionale signalled his departure at a time least expected. Trap's attentions were drawn to him while he watched Bayern's Stefan Reuter (already destined for Turin).

The prospect of joining Italy's most acclaimed club was a dream come true. Kohler regards it as an added bonus to his desire to play in the League he describes as "the best and most exciting in the world."

He said: "I would have walked to Turin," he says. "My wish had been granted."

In contrast to Reuter, Kohler has been an overwhelming success. He has adapted swiftly and with nonchalance to the culture change, which has earned him the respect of some renowned forwards. Napoli's Brazilian striker, Antonio Careca, says: "It's difficult for a foreigner to settle down quickly in Italy, especially for a defender. He has to deal with the likes of Vialli, Voeller and Van Basten, but Kohler has succeeded. He is one of the best defenders in Europe, and among the best overseas players to have arrived here in recent years."

Lazio's Karl-Heinz Riedle also is full of praise for his international colleague. "He's one of the best," he says. "His Italian experience will benefit our national team."

The Italians have been astounded by Kohler's ability when in possession, but he says: "I started as a midfield player, which is probably why I feel at ease when I move forward."

Kohler's first goal, against Bari, came from a splendid one-two with Roberto Baggio and a low drive past goalkeeper Enzo Biato.

Juventus president Giampiero Boniperti was almost overcome with surprise. "That was the work of a centre-forward," he said.

Kohler, who has worked hard in the gym in order to add the bulk his marker's role demands, can expect a glorious future. He is still only 26 and already a World Champion.

The rest of the Serie A may be hoping that their sharpshooters will have ignored Julio Cesar's description of his Juventus sidekick. "He isn't afraid of anybody," the Brazilian said. "Just looking at him is frighteneing."

With David Platt and Gianluca Vialli added to an already impressive Juventus squad, Iron Foot could be marching to another victory this season.

England still top of the table . . .

despite that five year gap

ENGLISH football is often criticised, probably nowhere more fiercely than in England itself.

But the figures do not lie. In the context of European victories, England reigns supreme.

No fewer than 13 clubs in Football League membership have won at least one European trophy — a total of 23 out of the 103 so far contested.

Since the first match in the Champions' Cup, a 3-3 draw between Sporting Lisbon and Partizan Belgrade in September 1955, there have been 37 finals in that event. English clubs have won eight of them, one more than the Italians and the Spanish.

There have been 34 UEFA Cup (formerly Fairs Cup) tournaments, dating back to the old two-year cycle between cities who could enter only if they held trade fairs. England have had nine victories, one more than Spain.

In the "baby" of the competitions, the Cup-winners' Cup, England have won six of the 32 events, one ahead of both Spain and Italy.

The statistics reproduced with this article indicate that there has been a greater spread of talent in England than in other countries.

That may no longer be the case, with freedom of contract making movement of players much more simple, and more and more wealth being concentrated at the very top of the pyramid that will form the new so-called Super League.

But even though England's clubs were barred from Europe for five years after the Heysel disaster, ironically brought about by "supporters" of Liverpool, probably the country's best-behaved club on European trips, as well as the most successful, the continental teams were unable to make up the leeway.

If there had been no ban as a result of Heysel, how many more trophies would have been brought back across the Channel?

Although there are frequent complaints that English teams play too many matches in too many unimportant competitions, the players seem to thrive on hard work.

Despite the high number of fixtures, the results indicate a continuing high level of all-round performance, even if there is less of the individual brilliance that illuminates the game in centres such as Milan and Madrid.

The figures also show that success is very, very difficult to achieve. Only 15 countries have provided even one winner in the 103 tournaments, 72 of which have been claimed by teams from only four nations — England, Spain, Italy and Germany.

At club level, almost exactly half the competitions have been won by only 11 teams with 41 others sharing the remaining prizes. And Juventus were the ONLY club to win all three titles until Barcelona and Ajax emulated them a few weeks ago.

The former president of Real Madrid, Santiago Bernabeu, used to say that riding a bicycle to the moon was easier than winning the Champions' Cup. He was pretty well right, too.

Real, of course, won the first five, won again in 1966, and lost in three other finals. No club has matched their supremacy, and the way the results have gone shows that while clubs can win twice or even three titles in succession, they rarely manage to sustain such effectiveness for much longer.

Benfica, for example, won in 1961 and 1962, and were beaten finalists in 1963 and 1965, losing 1-0 to Internazionale (who were playing on their own ground) after their goalkeeper had gone off. That was Inter's second successive victory, but they have not won the trophy since, and Benfica have lost three more finals.

The 1970s began with a period of Dutch dominance, one win by Feyenoord followed by an Ajax hat-trick, without a goal conceded in any of their three victories. Not until 1988, however, did the title go back to Holland, when PSV Eindhoven beat Benfica on penalties.

The Ajax treble was followed by another, from Bayern Munich, but only Hamburg in 1983 have taken the Cup to Germany since then.

England's sole win before the late 70s was in 1969, when Manchester United at last achieved Matt Busby's ambition.

Eventually Liverpool began to dominate, winning twice and then a third time after two in a row by Nottingham Forest, plus once more in 1984. Had the Heysel game progressed on a normal basis a year later, Liverpool may well have completed a second double.

Milan became the eighth club to win twice in succession, in 1989 and 1990. But civil strife in Yugoslavia meant that Red Star Belgrade were handicapped in their efforts to maintain the "cluster" theory in the season just ended, following their mean-spirited win on penalties against Marseille just over a year ago. The civil war in Yugoslavia meant that they had to play every match in a foreign country.

Oddly enough, there has been no instance of successive victories in the Cup-winners' Cup, and only one in the UEFA Cup. That was in 1985 and 1986, and the feat was achieved by Real Madrid.

Who else? BY DAVID **PROLE**

ECC — Champions Cup.
CWC — Cup-winners' Cup.
UEC — Fairs/UEFA Cup.

Country	Clubs	ECC	CWC	UEC	Total
England	13	8	6	9	23
Spain	5	7	5	8	20
Italy	7	7	5	5	17
West Germany	7	4	4	4	12
Holland	3	5	1	3	9
Portugal	3	3	1	0	4
Belgium	2	0	3	1	4
Scotland	3	1	2	0	3
Soviet Union	2	0	3	0	3
Yugoslavia	2	1	0	1	2
Sweden	1	0	0	2	2
East Germany	1	0	1	0	1
Czechoslovakia	1	0	1	0	1
Hungary	1	0	0	1	1
Romania	1	1	0	0	1
	52	37	32	34	103

● There have been no winning clubs from France — originators of the idea of European competition — European Championship holders Denmark, Bulgaria, Poland, Austria and Greece, among others.

England (13)

	ECC	CWC	UEC	Total
Liverpool	4	0	2	6
Tottenham	0	1	2	3
Nottingham Forest	2	0	0	2
Manchester United	1	1	0	2
Leeds United	0	0	2	2
Arsenal	0	0	1	1
Aston Villa	1	0	0	1
Chelsea	0	1	0	1
Everton	0	1	0	1
Ipswich Town	0	0	1	1
Manchester City	0	1	0	1
Newcastle United	0	0	1	1
West Ham United	0	1	0	1
	8	6	9	23

Spain (5)

	ECC	CWC	UEC	Total
Real Madrid	6	0	2	8
Barcelona	1	3	3	7
Valencia	0	1	2	3
Atletico Madrid	0	1	0	1
Real Zaragoza	0	0	1	1
	7	5	8	20

Italy (7)

	ECC	CWC	UEC	Total
AC Milan	4	2	0	6
Juventus	1	1	2	4
Internazionale	2	0	1	3
Fiorentina	0	1	0	1
Napoli	0	0	1	1
Roma	0	0	1	1
Sampdoria	0	1	0	1
	7	5	5	17

West Germany (7)

	ECC	CWC	UEC	Total
Bayern Munich	3	1	0	4
Borussia Mg	0	0	2	2
Hamburg SV	1	1	0	2
B. Dortmund	0	1	0	1
Eintracht Frankfurt	0	0	1	1
Bayer Leverkusen	0	0	1	1
Werder Bremen	0	1	0	1
	4	4	4	12

Holland (3)

	ECC	CWC	UEC	Total
Ajax	3	1	1	4
Feyenoord	1	0	1	2
PSV Eindhoven	1	0	1	2
	5	1	3	9

Portugal (3)

	ECC	CWC	UEC	Total
Benfica	2	0	0	2
Sporting Lisbon	0	1	0	1
FC Porto	1	0	0	1
	3	1	0	4

Belgium (2)

	ECC	CWC	UEC	Total
Anderlecht	0	2	1	3
Mechelen	0	1	0	1
	0	3	1	4

Scotland (3)

	ECC	CWC	UEC	Total
Celtic	1	0	0	1
Rangers	0	1	0	1
Aberdeen	0	1	0	1
	1	2	0	3

Soviet Union (2)

	ECC	CWC	UEC	Total
Kiev Dynamo	0	2	0	2
Dynamo Tbilisi	0	1	0	1
	0	3	0	3

Yugoslavia (2)

	ECC	CWC	EUC	Total
Red Star Belgrade	1	0	0	1
Dynamo Zagreb	0	0	1	1
	1	0	1	2

Sweden (1)

	ECC	CWC	EUC	Total
IFK Gothenburg	0	0	2	2

East Germany (1)

Magdeburg	0	1	0	1

Czechoslovakia (1)

Slovan Bratislava	0	1	0	1

Hungary (1)

Ferencvaros	0	0	1	1

Romania (1)

Steaua Bucharest	1	0	0	1
	37	32	34	103

WORLD CUP ROUND-UP

BY JOHN KELLY

WORLD CUP action returns to Europe this month with Estonia and Latvia making their first appearances in the competition for more than half a century.

In Group Three, Baltic neighbours Latvia and Lithuania face each other on the 12th before the European champions, Denmark, travel to Latvia on the 26th.

This match is important for the Danes, who need to follow their European triumph with a win, as Spain and the Republic of Ireland have already won their opening matches.

In Group One, Estonia entertain Switzerland on the 16th, the first game in a group which also contains Italy, Scotland, Portugal and Malta.

In the CONCACAF region the first round matches are nearing completion.

Bermuda, Honduras and El Salvador — who thrashed Nicaragua 10-1 on aggregate — already have qualified for the final round, where they will join Mexico, Canada and three other qualifiers.

In the Central Region, El Salvador booked their place with a 5-1 victory over Nicaragua. But many of the 8,882 fans in San Salvador's Cuscatian Stadium jeered the home side who, being five goals ahead from the first leg, appeared uninterested in taxing themselves further.

Rodger Gray . . . scored in New Zealand's 4-1 win over Vanuatu.

After the match El Salvador's Nicaraguan coach, Anibal Ruiz, admitted that his side would have to improve greatly if they were to qualify for the finals in the United States.

Honduras beat Guatemala 2-0 at home after a 0-0 draw in Guatemala City to reach the final round.

In the Caribbean Region, Bermuda overcame Antigua with 3-0 and 2-1 victories. Jamaica's 2-1 victory over Trinidad and Tobago in Port of Spain gives the Jamaicans the advantage in that tie, with the return leg in Jamaica on the 16th of this month.

The only other matches played have been in the Oceania section where New Zealand have taken a firm grip on Group Two.

They opened their campaign with a 3-0 home victory over Fiji and followed that with home and away victories over Vanuatu.

The home match in Auckland was an 8-0 thrashing, with a hat-trick for Laus and two goals each for McGarry and McLennan.

Australia, the favourites in Group One, play their first match away to the Solomon Islands — who opened with a 1-1 draw against Tahiti — in September.

The Aussies have been preparing with a three-match friendly series against Croatia which yielded two victories and a draw.

Perhaps friendly is not a good description of the series though, as Croatia had a player dismissed in each match.

Results

1994 World Cup Qualifying Groups

EUROPE

38 entries (39 members, Liechtenstein withdrew)

● *Top two teams in each Group qualify for finals (Germany qualify as holders).*

GROUP 1
Italy, Scotland, Portugal, Switzerland, Malta, Estonia.

16.08.92 Estonia v Switzerland
09.09.92 Switzerland v Scotland
14.10.92 Italy v Switzerland
14.10.92 Scotland v Portugal
25.10.92 Malta v Estonia
18.11.92 Scotland v Italy
18.11.92 Switzerland v Malta
19.12.92 Malta v Italy
24.01.93 Malta v Portugal
17.02.93 Scotland v Malta
24.02.93 Portugal v Italy
24.03.93 Italy v Malta
31.03.93 Switzerland v Portugal
14.04.93 Italy v Estonia
17.04.93 Malta v Switzerland
28.04.93 Portugal v Scotland
01.05.93 Switzerland v Italy
12.05.93 Estonia v Malta
19.05.93 Estonia v Scotland
02.06.93 Scotland v Estonia
19.06.93 Portugal v Malta
05.09.93 Estonia v Portugal
08.09.93 Scotland v Switzerland
22.09.93 Estonia v Italy
13.10.93 Portugal v Switzerland
13.10.93 Italy v Scotland
10.11.93 Portugal v Estonia
17.11.93 Italy v Portugal
17.11.93 Malta v Scotland
17.11.93 Switzerland v Estonia

GROUP 2
England, Holland, Poland, Norway, Turkey, San Marino.

09.09.92 Norway v San Marino
23.09.92 Norway v Holland
23.09.92 Poland v Turkey
07.10.92 San Marino v Norway
14.10.92 England v Norway
14.10.92 Holland v Poland
28.10.92 Turkey v San Marino
18.11.92 England v Turkey
16.12.92 Turkey v Holland
17.02.93 England v San Marino
24.02.93 Holland v Turkey
10.03.93 San Marino v Turkey
24.03.93 Holland v San Marino
31.03.93 Turkey v England
28.04.93 England v Holland
28.04.93 Norway v Turkey
28.04.93 Poland v San Marino
19.05.93 San Marino v Poland
29.05.93 Poland v England
02.06.93 Norway v England
09.06.93 Holland v Norway
08.09.93 England v Poland
22.09.93 Norway v Poland
22.09.93 San Marino v Holland
13.10.93 Holland v England
13.10.93 Poland v Norway
27.10.93 Turkey v Poland
10.11.93 Turkey v Norway
16.11.93 San Marino v England
17.11.93 Poland v Holland

GROUP 3
Spain, Republic of Ireland, Denmark, Northern Ireland, Albania, Lithuania, Latvia.

22.04.92 Spain v Albania 3-0
28.04.92 Northern Ireland v Lithuania 2-2
26.05.92 Rep. of Ireland v Albania 2-0
03.06.92 Albania v Lithuania 1-0
12.08.92 Latvia v Lithuania
26.08.92 Latvia v Denmark
09.09.92 Iceland v Latvia
09.09.92 Northern Ireland v Albania
23.09.92 Latvia v Spain
23.09.92 Lithuania v Denmark
14.10.92 Denmark v Rep. of Ireland
14.10.92 Northern Ireland v Spain
28.10.92 Lithuania v Latvia
11.11.92 Albania v Latvia
18.11.92 Northern Ireland v Denmark
18.11.92 Spain v Rep. of Ireland
16.12.92 Spain v Latvia
17.02.93 Albania v Northern Ireland
24.02.93 Spain v Lithuania
31.03.93 Denmark v Spain
31.03.93 Rep. of Ireland v Northern Ireland
14.04.93 Denmark v Latvia
14.04.93 Lithuania v Albania
28.04.93 Rep. of Ireland v Denmark
28.04.93 Spain v Northern Ireland
15.05.93 Latvia v Albania
25.05.93 Lithuania v Northern Ireland
26.05.93 Albania v Rep. of Ireland
02.06.93 Denmark v Albania
02.06.93 Latvia v Northern Ireland
02.06.93 Lithuania v Spain
09.06.93 Latvia v Rep. of Ireland
16.06.93 Lithuania v Rep. of Ireland
25.08.93 Denmark v Lithuania
08.09.93 Albania v Denmark
08.09.93 Rep. of Ireland v Lithuania
08.09.93 Northern Ireland v Latvia
22.09.93 Albania v Spain
13.10.93 Denmark v Northern Ireland
13.10.93 Rep. of Ireland v Spain
17.11.93 Northern Ireland v Rep. of Ireland
17.11.93 Spain v Denmark

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Spain	1	1	0	0	3	0	2
Rep. of Ireland	1	1	0	0	2	0	2
Albania	3	1	0	2	1	5	2
N. Ireland	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
Lithuania	2	0	1	1	2	3	1
Denmark	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Latvia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

GROUP 4
Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Wales, Cyprus, Faroe Islands.

22.04.92 Belgium v Cyprus 1-0
06.05.92 Romania v Faroe Islands 7-0
20.05.92 Romania v Wales 5-1
03.06.92 Faroe Islands v Belgium 0-3
18.06.92 Faroe Islands v Cyprus 0-2
02.09.92 Czechoslovakia v Belgium
09.09.92 Wales v Faroe Islands
23.09.92 Czechoslovakia v Faroe Islands
14.10.92 Belgium v Romania
14.10.92 Cyprus v Wales
14.11.92 Romania v Czechoslovakia
18.11.92 Wales v Belgium
29.11.92 Cyprus v Romania
02.01.93 Cyprus v Belgium
24.03.93 Cyprus v Czechoslovakia
31.03.93 Belgium v Wales
14.04.93 Romania v Cyprus
25.04.93 Cyprus v Faroe Islands
28.04.93 Czechoslovakia v Wales
22.05.93 Belgium v Faroe Islands
02.06.93 Czechoslovakia v Romania
06.06.93 Faroe Islands v Wales
16.06.93 Faroe Islands v Czechoslovakia
08.09.93 Wales v Czechoslovakia
08.09.93 Faroe Islands v Romania
13.10.93 Romania v Belgium
13.10.93 Wales v Cyprus
27.10.93 Czechoslovakia v Cyprus
17.11.93 Wales v Romania
17.11.93 Belgium v Czechoslovakia

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Romania	2	2	0	0	12	1	4
Belgium	2	2	0	0	4	0	4
Cyprus	2	1	0	1	2	1	2
Czechoslovakia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wales	1	0	0	1	1	5	0
Faroe Islands	3	0	0	3	0	12	0

GROUP 5
CIS, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Greece, Iceland, Luxembourg.

13.05.92 Greece v Iceland 1-0
03.06.92 Hungary v Iceland 1-2
02.09.92 Iceland v Yugoslavia
09.09.92 Luxembourg v Hungary
23.09.92 Yugoslavia v CIS
07.10.92 Iceland v Greece
14.10.92 CIS v Iceland
14.10.92 Hungary v Yugoslavia
28.10.92 CIS v Luxembourg
11.11.92 Greece v Hungary
15.11.92 Luxembourg v Yugoslavia
17.02.93 Greece v Luxembourg
31.03.93 Hungary v Greece
31.03.93 Yugoslavia v Luxembourg
14.04.93 Luxembourg v CIS
28.04.93 CIS v Hungary
28.04.93 Yugoslavia v Greece
20.05.93 CIS v Greece
20.05.93 Luxembourg v Iceland
02.06.93 Iceland v CIS
16.06.93 Iceland v Hungary
22.08.93 Yugoslavia v Iceland
08.09.93 Hungary v CIS
08.09.93 Iceland v Luxembourg
06.10.93 CIS v Yugoslavia
12.10.93 Luxembourg v Greece
27.10.93 Greece v Yugoslavia
27.10.93 Hungary v Luxembourg
17.11.93 Greece v CIS
17.11.93 Yugoslavia v Hungary

GROUP 6
France, Austria, Sweden, Bulgaria, Finland, Israel.

14.05.92 Finland v Bulgaria 0-3
09.09.92 Bulgaria v France
09.09.92 Finland v Sweden
07.10.92 Sweden v Bulgaria
14.10.92 France v Austria
28.10.92 Austria v Israel
11.11.92 Israel v Sweden
14.11.92 France v Finland
02.12.92 Israel v Bulgaria
17.02.93 Israel v France
27.03.93 Austria v France
14.04.93 Austria v Bulgaria
28.04.93 France v Sweden
28.04.93 Bulgaria v Finland
12.05.93 Bulgaria v Israel
13.05.93 Finland v Austria
19.05.93 Sweden v Austria
02.06.93 Sweden v Israel
16.06.93 Finland v Israel
22.08.93 Sweden v France
25.08.93 Austria v Finland
08.09.93 Finland v France
08.09.93 Bulgaria v Sweden
13.10.93 France v Israel
13.10.93 Bulgaria v Austria
13.10.93 Sweden v Finland
27.20.93 Israel v Austria
10.11.93 Austria v Sweden
10.11.93 Israel v Finland
17.11.93 France v Bulgaria

AFRICA

37 entries (48 members, Sierra Leone withdrew)

● *Group winners qualify for Second Round of 3 mini leagues of 3 teams each. Winners qualify for finals.*

First Round
GROUP A
Algeria, Ghana, Uganda, Burundi.

09.10.92 Algeria v Burundi
09.10.92 Ghana v Uganda
23.10.92 Burundi v Ghana
23.10.92 Uganda v Algeria
18.12.92 Burundi v Uganda
18.12.92 Ghana v Algeria

GROUP B
Cameroon, Zaire, Liberia, Swaziland.

09.10.92 Cameroon v Swaziland
09.10.92 Zaire v Liberia
23.10.92 Liberia v Cameroon
23.10.92 Swaziland v Zaire
18.12.92 Swaziland v Liberia
18.12.92 Zaire v Cameroon

GROUP C
Egypt, Zimbabwe, Togo, Angola.

09.10.92 Egypt v Angola

CONTINUED OVER

09.10.92 Zimbabwe v Togo
23.10.92 Angola v Zimbabwe
23.10.92 Togo v Egypt
18.12.92 Angola v Togo
18.12.92 Zimbabwe v Egypt

GROUP D
Nigeria, Congo, Libya, Sao Tome & Principe.
09.10.92 Congo v Libya
09.10.92 Nigeria v Sao Tome & Principe
23.10.92 Libya v Nigeria
23.10.92 Sao Tome & Principe v Congo
18.12.92 Congo v Nigeria
18.12.92 Sao Tome & Principe v Libya

GROUP E
Ivory Coast, Sudan, Niger, Botswana.
09.10.92 Ivory Coast v Botswana
09.10.92 Sudan v Niger
23.10.92 Botswana v Sudan
23.10.92 Niger v Ivory Coast
18.12.92 Botswana v Niger
18.12.92 Sudan v Ivory Coast

GROUP F
Morocco, Tunisia, Malawi, Ethiopia.
09.10.92 Morocco v Ethiopia
09.10.92 Tunisia v Malawi
23.10.92 Ethiopia v Tunisia
23.10.92 Malawi v Morocco
18.12.92 Ethiopia v Malawi
18.12.92 Tunisia v Morocco

GROUP G
Senegal, Gabon, Mozambique, Mauritania.
09.10.92 Gabon v Mozambique
09.10.92 Senegal v Mauritania
23.10.92 Mauritania v Gabon
23.10.92 Mozambique v Senegal
18.12.92 Gabon v Senegal
18.12.92 Mauritania v Mozambique

GROUP H
Zambia, Madagascar, Burkina Faso, Tanzania.
09.10.92 Madagascar v Burkina Faso
09.10.92 Zambia v Tanzania
23.10.92 Burkina Faso v Zambia
23.10.92 Tanzania v Madagascar
18.12.92 Madagascar v Zambia
18.12.92 Tanzania v Burkina Faso

GROUP I
Kenya, Guinea, Mali, Gambia.
09.10.92 Guinea v Mali
09.10.92 Kenya v Gambia
23.10.92 Gambia v Guinea
23.10.92 Mali v Kenya
18.12.92 Gambia v Mali
18.12.92 Guinea v Kenya

CONCACAF

23 entries (27 members, Cuba withdrew)

● *Winners of Group A play (home & away) against winners of Group B. Winning nation qualifies for finals. Runners-up play Oceania winners for right to play South America Group A runners-up for a place in the finals (United States qualify as hosts).*

Pre-preliminary Round
CARIBBEAN REGION — NORTH
21.03.92 Dominican Rep. v P. Rico 1-2
22.03.92 St Lucia v St Vincent 1-0
29.03.92 P. Rico v Dominican Rep. 1-1
29.03.92 St Vincent v St Lucia 3-1

Preliminary Round
CARIBBEAN REGION — NORTH
26.04.92 Bermuda v Haiti 1-0
25.05.92 Jamaica v Puerto Rico 2-1
25.05.92 Haiti v Bermuda 2-1
30.05.92 Puerto Rico v Jamaica 0-1
St Vincent & Grenadines v Cuba*.
* Cuba withdrew.
St Vincent, Bermuda & Jamaica qualify for 1st rnd
CARIBBEAN REGION — SOUTH
19.04.92 Dutch Antilles v Antigua 1-1
26.04.92 Antigua v Dutch Antilles 3-0
26.04.92 Guyana v Surinam 1-2
24.05.92 Barbados v Trin. & Tobago 1-2
25.05.92 Surinam v Guyana 1-1
31.05.92 Trin. & Tobago v Barbados 3-0
Trinidad & Tobago, Antigua and Surinam qualify for 1st rnd

First Round
CENTRAL REGION
19.07.92 Guatemala v Honduras 0-0
19.07.92 Nicaragua v El Salvador 0-5
23.07.92 El Salvador v Nicaragua 5-1
26.07.92 Honduras v Guatemala 2-0
16.08.92 Panama v Costa Rica
23.08.92 Costa Rica v Panama
El Salvador and Honduras qualify for 2nd round

CARIBBEAN REGION
15.06.92 Antigua v Bermuda 0-3
05.07.92 Trinidad & Tobago v Jamaica 1-2
06.07.92 Bermuda v Antigua 2-1
02.08.92 Surinam v St Vincent
16.08.92 Jamaica v Trinidad & Tobago
30.08.92 St Vincent v Surinam
Bermuda qualify for 2nd round

Second Round
GROUP A: Mexico and 3 First Round qualifiers.
GROUP B: Canada and 3 first Round qualifiers.

SOUTH AMERICA

9 entries (10 members, Chile suspended)

● *Winners of Group A & winners & runners-up in Group B qualify for finals. Group A runners-up play winners of CONCACAF/South America play-off for a place in the finals.*

GROUP A
Argentina, Colombia, Paraguay, Peru.
01.08.93 Colombia v Paraguay
01.08.93 Peru v Argentina
08.08.93 Paraguay v Argentina
08.08.93 Peru v Colombia
15.08.93 Colombia v Argentina
15.08.93 Paraguay v Peru
22.08.93 Argentina v Peru
22.08.93 Paraguay v Colombia
29.08.93 Argentina v Paraguay
29.08.93 Colombia v Peru
05.09.93 Argentina v Colombia
05.09.93 Peru v Paraguay

GROUP B
Brazil, Uruguay, Ecuador, Bolivia, Venezuela.
08.07.93 Ecuador v Brazil
08.07.93 Venezuela v Bolivia
25.07.93 Bolivia v Brazil
25.07.93 Venezuela v Uruguay
01.08.93 Uruguay v Ecuador
01.08.93 Venezuela v Brazil
08.08.93 Bolivia v Uruguay
08.08.93 Ecuador v Venezuela
15.08.93 Bolivia v Ecuador
15.08.93 Uruguay v Brazil
22.08.93 Bolivia v Venezuela
22.08.93 Brazil v Ecuador
29.08.93 Brazil v Bolivia
29.08.93 Uruguay v Venezuela
05.09.93 Brazil v Venezuela
05.09.93 Uruguay v Ecuador
12.09.93 Uruguay v Bolivia
12.09.93 Venezuela v Ecuador
19.09.93 Brazil v Uruguay
19.09.93 Ecuador v Bolivia

OCEANIA

7 entries (8 members, Western Samoa withdrew)

● *The two Group winners play (home & away) with the winners qualifying to meet the CONCACAF runners-up. The winners of that match will meet the South America Group A runners-up for a place in the finals.*

GROUP 1
11.07.92 Solomon Islands v Tahiti 1-1
04.09.92 Solomon Islands v Australia
11.09.92 Tahiti v Australia
20.09.92 Australia v Tahiti
25.09.92 Australia v Solomon Islands
09.10.92 Tahiti v Solomon Islands

GROUP 2
New Zealand, Fiji, Vanuatu.
07.06.92 New Zealand v Fiji 3-0
27.06.92 Vanuatu v New Zealand 1-4
01.07.92 New Zealand v Vanuatu 8-0
12.09.92 Fiji v Vanuatu
19.09.92 Fiji v New Zealand
26.09.92 Vanuatu v Fiji

ASIA

29 entries (36 members)

● *The six Group winners qualify for Second Round, to be played as (home & away) one mini-league. Winners & runners-up qualify for finals.*

First Round
GROUP A
China, Iraq, Jordan, Yemen, Pakistan,

GROUP B
Iran, Syria, Oman, Taiwan, Myanmar (formerly Burma).

GROUP C
North Korea, Qatar, Singapore, Vietnam, Indonesia.

GROUP D
South Korea, Bahrain, Hong Kong, Lebanon, India.

GROUP E
Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Malaysia, Macao.

GROUP F
United Arab Emirates, Japan, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh.

International Results

SATURDAY, MAY 30

May 30 = WC CONCACAF qual
Puerto Rico 0
Jamaica 1 (Wright)
Jamaica win 3-1 on agg

SUNDAY, MAY 31

May 31 — WC CONCACAF qual
Trinidad & Tobago 3 (Faustin 63, Jamerson 68, Lewis 84)
Barbados 0
Trinidad & Tobago win 5-1 on agg

May 31 = WC CONCACAF qual
Antigua 0
Bermuda 3 (Thompson 21, Camm 70, Jennings 79)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 6,000.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3

Jun 3 = Tallinn — friendly
Estonia 1 (Pustov 10)
Slovenia 1 (Benedejcic 73)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 5,000.

SATURDAY, JUNE 6

Jun 6 = Hamilton — WC CONCACAF qual
Bermuda 2
Antigua 1
Bermuda win 5-1 on agg

SUNDAY, JUNE 7

Jun 7 = Christchurch — WC Oceania qual
New Zealand 3 (Wright 15, 50, Halligan 42)
Fiji 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 12,000.

Jun 7 = Guatemala City — friendly
Guatemala 7 (Edwin Westphal 5, 12, 18, 30, 60, 78, Byron Perez 56)
Nicaragua 1 (Rostran 85)
HT: 4-0. **Att:** 8,000. **Ref:** Chinchilla (Gua)
Guatemala: Chuga - M Davila (Leon), Monzon, Batres, Machon - Salgeuro (Ceballos), Giron, Martinez (Mendez), Castaneda - Westphal, Perez (Vargas).
Nicaragua: Chamorro - Aralca, Barrios, A Gonzalez (Gomez), H Gonzalez (B Rodriguez) - Mendez, Baltodano, Urroz (R Rodriguez), Cruz - Bendana, Rostran.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10

Jun 10 = Stockholm — EC finals Gp 1
Sweden 1 (Eriksson 25)
France 1 (Papin 58)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 29,860. **Ref:** Spirin (CIS)
Sweden: Ravelli - R Nilsson, J Eriksson, P Andersson, Bjorklund - Ingesson, Schwarz, Thern, Limpar - K Andersson (Dahlin 74), Brolin.
France: Martini - Boli, Blanc, Casoni - Angloma (Fernandez 66), Cantona, Sauzee, Deschamps, Amoros - Papin, Vahirua (Perez 46).

THURSDAY, JUNE 11

Jun 11 = Malmo — EC finals Gp 1
England 0
Denmark 0
Att: 26,385. **Ref:** Blankenstein (Hol)
England: Woods - Curle (Daley 65), Keown, Walker, Pearce - Palmer, Steven, Platt, Merson (Webb 73) - Lineker, Smith.
Denmark: Schmeichel - K Nielsen, Olsen, Christofte - Sivebaek, Vilfort, Jensen, B Laudrup, Andersen - B Christensen, Povlsen.

FRIDAY, JUNE 12

Jun 12 = Gothenburg — EC finals Gp 2
Holland 1 (Bergkamp 76)
Scotland 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 35,720. **Ref:** Karlsson (Swe)
Holland: Van Breukelen - Van Aerle, R Koeman, Van Tiggelen - Rijkaard, Wouters (Jonk 55), Rob Witschge - Gullit, Bergkamp (Winter 85), Roy - Van Basten.
Scotland: Goram - McKimmie, Gough, McPherson, Malpas - McAllister, McStay, McCall, McClair (Ferguson 79) - Durie, McCoist (Gallacher 73).

Jun 12 = Norrkoping — EC finals Gp 2
CIS 1 (Dobrovolski 62pen)
Germany 1 (Hassler 89)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 17,410. **Ref:** Biguet (Fra)
CIS: Kharin - O Kuznetsov, Chernishov, Tsveiba - Kanchelskis, Mikhailichenko, Liuti (Onopko 46), Kolivanov, D Kuznetsov, Shalimov (Ivanov 83) - Dobrovolski.
Germany: Illgner - Binz - Reuter (Klinsmann 63), Kohler, Buchwald, Brehme - Hassler, Effenberg, Doll - Voller (Moller 40), Riedle.

SUNDAY, JUNE 14

Jun 14 = Malmo — EC finals Gp 1
France 0
England 0
Att: 26,535. **Ref:** Puhl (Hun)
France: Martini - Boli, Blanc, Casoni - Amoros, Sauzee (Angloma 46), Fernandez (Perez 75), Durand, Deschamps - Cantona, Papin.
England: Woods - Palmer, Keown, Walker, Pearce - Sinton, Steven, Platt, Batty - Lineker, Shearer.

Jun 14 = Stockholm — EC finals Gp 1
Sweden 1 (Brolin 59)
Denmark 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 29,902. **Ref:** Schmidhuber (Ger)
Sweden: Ravelli - R Nilsson, J Eriksson, P Andersson, Bjorklund - Ingesson, Schwarz, Thern, Limpar (Erlingmark 89) - Dahlin (Ekstrom 75), Brolin.
Denmark: Schmeichel - K Nielsen, Olsen, Christofte - Sivebaek, Vilfort, Jensen (Larsen 62), Andersen - B Laudrup - Povlsen, B Christensen.

Jun 14 = Orlando — friendly
United States 0
Australia 1 (Spink 84)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 17,309. **Ref:** Cummings (US)
US: Meola (Dodd 46) - Clavijo, Balboa, Armstrong, Savage, Quinn, Michallik, Chung (Ibsen 66), Murray (Sorber 46), Perez, Stewart.
Australia: Zabica - Zelic, T Vidmar, Tobin, Durakovic, Blagojevic, A Vidmar (Van Blerk 76), Wade, Tapai, Bozinoski (Petersen 76), Spink.

MONDAY, JUNE 15

Jun 15 = Libreville — friendly
Gabon 1 (Makaya 60)
Togo 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 10,000.

Jun 15 = Norrkoping — EC finals Gp 2
Germany 2 (Riedle 30, Effenberg 47)
Scotland 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 17,638. **Ref:** Goethals (Bel)
Germany: Illgner - Kohler, Binz, Buchwald - Hassler, Effenberg, Moller, Sammer, Brehme - Klinsmann, Riedle (Reuter 68; Schulz 74).
Scotland: Goram - McKimmie, Gough, McPherson, Malpas - McAllister, McCall, McStay, McClair - Durie (Nevin 55), McCoist (Gallacher 70).

Jun 15 = Gothenburg — EC finals Gp 2
Holland 0
CIS 0
Att: 34,400. **Ref:** Mikkelsen (Den)
Holland: Van Breukelen - Van Aerle, R Koeman, Van Tiggelen - Rijkaard, Wouters, Rob Witschge - Gullit (Van't Schip 70), Bergkamp (Viscaal 80), Roy - Van Basten.
CIS: Kharin - Chernishov - O Kuznetsov - Kanchelskis, Tsveiba, Onopko - Mikhailichenko, Dobrovolski, Kolivanov, Aleinikov (D Kuznetsov 57) - Yuran (Kiriakov 66).

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17

Jun 17 = Malmo — EC finals Gp 1
France 1 (Papin 61)
Denmark 2 (Larsen 7, Elstrup 78)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 25,673. **Ref:** Forstinger (Aut)
France: Boli, Blanc, Casoni - Amoros, Deschamps, Perez (Cocard 80), Durand - Cantona, Papin, Vahirua (Fernandez 46).
Denmark: Schmeichel - K Nielsen (Piechnik 62), Olsen, Christofte - Sivebaek, Larsen, Jensen, Andersen - B Laudrup (Elstrup 69) - Povlsen, Frank.

Jun 17 = Stockholm — EC finals Gp 1
Sweden 2 (Eriksson 51, Brolin 82)
England 1 (Platt 3)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 30,126. **Ref:** Rosa dos Santos (Por)
Sweden: Ravelli - R Nilsson, J Eriksson, P Andersson, Bjorklund - Imngesson, Schwarz, Thern, Limpar (Ekstrom 46) - Dahlin, Brolin.
England: Woods - Batty, Keown, Walker, Pearce - Daley, Palmer, Webb, Sinton (Merson 76) - Linker (Smith 61), Platt.

THURSDAY, JUNE 18

Jun 18 = Gothenburg — EC finals Gp 2
Holland 3 (Rijkaard 2, Rob Witschge 14, Bergkamp 71)
Germany 1 (Klinsmann 53)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 37,725. **Ref:** Pairetto (Ita)
Holland: Van Breukelen - Van Tiggelen, R Koeman, De Boer (Winter 61) - Rijkaard, Wouters, Rob Witschge - Gullit, Bergkamp (Bosz 87), Roy - Van Basten.
Germany: Illgner - Binz (Sammer 46) - Brehme, Kohler, Frontzeck - Hassler, Effenberg, Helmer, Moller - Klinsmann, Riedle (Doll 76).

Jun 18 = Norrkoping — EC finals Gp 2
Scotland 3 (McStay 6, McClair 17, McAllister 84pen)
CIS 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 14,660. **Ref:** Rothlisberger (Swi)
Scotland: Goram - McKimmie, Gough, McPherson, Boyd - McAllister, McStay, McClair, McCall - Gallacher (Nevin 79), McCoist (McInally 67).
CIS: Kharin - O Kuznetsov, Chernishov, Tchadadze - Kanchelskis, Mikhailichenko, Dobrovolski, Aleinikov (D Kuznetsov 46), Onopo - Kiriakov (Korneyev 46), Yuran.

Jun 18 = Toftir — WC Euro gp 4
Faroe Islands 0
Cyprus 2 (Sotiriu 30, Papavasilou 58)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 4,500. **Ref:** Irwin (NI)
Faroes: Johansen - Jakobsen, T Hansen, Danielsen, Jonson - Morkore, Nielsen (Jarnskord), Rasmussen, A Hansen - Reynheim, Muller (Jensen 66).
Cyprus: Christofi - Kosta (Larku 46), Pittas, Konstantinou, Nikolau - Yiangudakus, D Ioannu, Charalambos, Savides - Sotiriu (Panagi 84), Papavasilu.

Jun 18 = Buenos Aires — friendly
Argentina 2 (Batistuta 47pen, 57)
Australia 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Dluzniewski (Uru)
Argentina: Goycochea - Basualdo, Vazquez, Ruggeri, Altamirano (Zarate) - Cagna, Redondo, Franco, Rodriguez (Scotto) - Caniggia (Astrada), Batistuta (Garcia).
Australia: Zabica - Blagojevic, Tobin, Ivanovic, Bernel (Duracovic) - Wade, Tapai, T Vidmar, Edward - Petersen (Zelic), A Vidmar (Van Blerk).

SUNDAY, JUNE 21

Jun 21 = Stockholm — EC semi-final
Sweden 2 (Brolin 64pen, K Andersson 89)
Germany 3 (Hassler 10, Riedle 58, 88)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 28,827, **Ref:** Lanese (Ita)
Sweden: Ravelli - R Nilsson, J Eriksson, Bjorklund, Ljung - K Andersson, Ingesson, Thern, J Nilsson (Limpar 59) - Dahlin (Ekstrom 72), Brolin.
Germany: Illgner - Reuter, Kohler, Helmer, Buchwald, Brehme - Hassler, Effenberg, Sammer - Klinsmann (Doll 89), Riedle.

Jun 21 = Montevideo — friendly
Uruguay 2 (Martinez 63, Larrea 84)
Australia 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 18,000. **Ref:** Loustau (Arg)
Uruguay: Siboldi - De los Santos, Sanchez, Kanapkis, Cabrera - Saralegui, Barrio, Zalazar - Paz (Dorta), Larrea, Morena (Martinez).
Australia: Filan - Ivanovic, Durakovic, Marth, Blagojevic - Bosinovski, Tobin, Peterson, Tapai - Spink (Edwards), Van Blerk.

MONDAY, JUNE 22

Jun 22 = Gothenburg — EC semi-final
Holland 2 (Bergkamp 23, Rijkaard 85)
Denmark 2 (Larsen 5, 32)
HT: 1-2. **90min:** 2-2. **Att:** 37,450. **Ref:** Soriano Aladren (Spa)
Aet. Denmark win 5-4 on pens
Penalties *(Holland first)*: Koeman 1-0, Larsen 1-1; Van Basten saved, Povlsen 1-2; Bergkamp 2-2, Elstrup 2-3; Rijkaard 3-3, Vilfort 3-4; Rob Witschge 4-4, Christofte 4-5.
Holland: Van Breukelen - Van Tiggelen, R Koeman, De Boer (Kieft 46) - Rijkaard, Wouters, Rob Witschge - Gullit, Bergkamp, Roy (Van't Schip 115) - Van Basten.
Denmark: Schmeichel - Piechnik, Olsen, Christofte - Sivebaek, Vilfort, Jensen, Larsen, Andersen (Claus Christiansen 68) - Povlsen, B Laudrup (Elstrup 57).

Jun 22 - Libreville — friendly
Gabon 0
Burundi 1 (Mapangou 59)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 6,000.

FRIDAY, JUNE 26

Jun 26 = Gothenburg — EC Final
Denmark 2 (Jensen 18, Vilfort 78)
Germany 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 37,800. **Ref:** Galler (Swi)
Denmark: Schmeichel - K Nielsen, Olsen, Piechnik - Sivebaek (C Christiansen 66), Vilfort, Jensen, Larsen, Christofte - Povlsen, B Laudrup.
Germany: Illgner - Reuter, Kohler, Helmer, Buchwald - Hassler, Effenberg (Thorn 80), Sammer (Doll 46), Brehme - Klinsmann, Riedle.

SATURDAY, JUNE 27

Jun 27 = Piscataway, New Jersey — friendly
United States 0
Ukraine 0
Att: 11,815. **Ref:** Caulfield (Rol)
US: Meola - Clavijo, Doyle, Balboa, Armstrong - Murray (Sorber 79), Quinn, Michallik, Kinnear - Wynalda (Masters 59), Vermes (Chung 46).
Ukraine: Pomazun - Tretyak, Bondarenko, Mikiforov, Pokydko - Moroz (Watamaniuk 80), Kovalets (Rebrov 76), Tsimbalar, Hidimenko - Guetsko, Charbakov.

Jun 27 = Port Vila — WC Oceania qual
Vanuatu 1 (Vatu)
New Zealand 4 (McClennan 2, Gray, Halligan pen)

Jun 27 = African Champ plm rnd, 2nd leg
Botswana 0
Lesotho 4 (Khali 20, Lekhotia 46, Mokhati 60, Mohale 85)
HT: 0-1.

SUNDAY, JUNE 28

Jun 28 = Tegucigalpa — friendly
Honduras 4 (Benett 22, 29, 68, 80)
Panama 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 9,100.
Honduras: Rivera (W Cruz) - Martinez (Soto), Yearwood, Castro (Arzu) - Abariba - Rochez, Funes, Obando (A Cruz), Calix - Benett, Suazo (Castillo).
Panama: Bustamente - Mendez (Gutierrez), Poyatos, Bolivar, Castro (Moreno) - Julio, Botello, Lynch (Guevara), Lozada (Delgado) - Ardines, Diaz (Chiari).

TUESDAY, JUNE 30

Jun 30 = Sal Pedro Sula — friendly
Honduras 4 (Suazo 23, 25, Calix 32, Obando 38)
Panama 0
HT: 4-0. **Att:** 6,000.
Honduras: W Cruz (Rivera) - Martinez (M Sambulla), Yearwood (Smith), Castro, Anariba - Funes (Flores), Rochez, Obando, Calix - Benett, Suazo (Castillo).

Panama: Bustamente - Moreno (Mendez), Penedo, Delgado (Diaz), Bolivar - Julio Cesar, Botello (Lynch), Guevara, Lozada - Andres (Chiari), Gutierrez.

SHELL CUP (Carribean Championship) in Trinidad & Tobago)
Group A

Martinique 4
Surinam 1

Trinidad & Tobago 7
Antigua 0

Trinidad & Tobago 2
Martinique 1

Martinique 4
Antigua 1

Trinidad & Tobago 1
Surinam 0

Table: Trinidad & Tobago 6pts, Martinique 4, Surinam 1, Antigua 1.

Group B

Cuba 2
Guadeloupe 0

Jamaica 2
St Vincent & Grenadines 0

Jamaica 1
Guadeloupe 0

Cuba 1
St Vincent & Grenadines 0

Table: Cuba 4pts, Jamaica 4pts, Guadeloupe 0, St Vincent 0.

Jun 27 = Port of Spain — Third Place Match
Martinique 1
Cuba 1
Martinique win 5-3 on pens

Jun 27 = Porto of Spain — Final
Trinidad & Tobago 3 (Lewis 19, Lapaty 37pen, Marcelle 85)
Jamaica 1 (Graham 49)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 20,000.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 1

Jul 1 = Auckland — WC Oceania qual
New Zealand 8 (Laus 3, McGarry 2, McLennan 2, Ironside)
Vanuatu 0

SATURDAY, JULY 4

Jul 4 = Montevideo — friendly
Uruguay 3 (Kanapkis 8, Adrian Paz 56, Zalazar 58)
Ecuador 1 (Angel Fernandez 83)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 15,000.

SUNDAY, JULY 5

Jul 5 = Port of Spain — WC CONCACAF qual
Trinidad & Tobago 1 (Charles 80)
Jamaica 2 (Isaacs 52, Anglin 65)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 25,000.

Jul 5 = African Nations' Cup — preilm rnd, 2nd leg
Guinea Bissau 1
Cape Verde 0
Guinea Bissau win 4-2 on agg

Jul 5 = Guatemala City — friendly
Guatemala 2 (Funes 43, Mendez 88)
Poland 2 (R Kosecki 17, 81)
HT: 1-1.

Jul 5 = Melbourne — friendly
Australia 1 (Marth 65)
Croatia 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 12,000. **Ref:** Fraser (Aus)
Australia: Zabica - Durakovic, Marth, Ivanovic, Tobin, Van Blerk, Tapai, Wade, Petersen, Spink, Polak.
Croatia: Ladic - Romic, Jerkan, Stimac, Istvanic (*Jelicic), Biskup - Mise, Vucevic, Spehar - Weber, Vlaovic.
*Jelicic sent off, 65min.

TUESDAY, JULY 7

Jul 7 = Durban — friendly
South Africa 1 (Khumalo 79pen)
Cameroon 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Masole (Bot)
S Africa: Anderson - Khambule, Radebe, Komphela, Nyati - Tovey, Khuse, Moosa (Makalakalane 50) - Chippa Masinga, Khumalo, Madida.
Cameroon: Andem - Tataw, Ndip, Onana, Edwelle - Mbarga (Ojomo 74), Pagal, Loza, Ewane - Milla, Chifru (Ndjappa 65).

WEDNESDAY, JULY 8

Jul 8 = Adelaide — friendly
Australia 3 (Tapai 10, Spink 12, Van Blerk 79)
Croatia 1 (Weber 31)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 3,500. **Ref:** McRae (Aus)
Australia: Zabica - Durakovic, Stewart, Ivanovic, Tobin, Van Blerk, Tapai, Wade, Petersen, Spink, Polak.
Croatia: Ladic - Romic, *Stimac, Bilic, Jerkan, Biskup - Mise, Vucevic, Pavlicic - Spehar, Weber.
*Stimac sent off, 73min.

THURSDAY, JULY 9

Jul 9 = Cape Town — friendly
South Africa 1 (Onana og 6)
Cameroon 2 (Ewane 7, 85)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 16,000. **Ref:** Mothobi (Bot)
S Africa: Anderson - Khambule, Radebe, Komphela, Nyati - Tovey (Motaung 83), Khuse, Makalakalane - Chippa Masinga (Crowie 67), Khumalo, Williams (Reed 76).
Cameroon: Andem - Ebwelle, Ndip (Essa 72), *Onana, Agbo - **Pagal, Loga, Djomo, Djapa (Belle 55) - Milla, Ewane.
*Onana sent off, 56min; **Pagal sent off, 58min.

SATURDAY, JULY 11

Jul 11 = Johannesburg — friendly
South Africa 2 (C Masinga 38, B Masinga 51)
Cameroon 2 (Pagal 6, Ewane 46)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 45,000. **Ref:** Sesikwe (Bot)
S Africa: Anderson - Rabede, Khompela, Khambule, Nyati - Khumalo, Tovey, Khuse, Makalakalane - C Masinga (Madida 83), B Masinga.
Cameroon: Andem - Agbo, Ebwelle, Ndip, Onana - Loga, Pagal (Ifanyi 65), Mbarga, Chifru (Mfomou 46) - Milla, Ewane.

SUNDAY, JULY 12

Jul 12 = Sydney — friendly
Australia 0
Croatia 0
Att: 12,000. **Ref:** Gary Power (Aus)
Australia: Zabica - Durakovic, Bernal, Ivanovic, Tobin, Van Blerk - Tapai, Petersen, Wade - Polak, Brown.
Croatia: Zitujak - Romic, Jerkan, Vulic, Bilic, Biskup - Mise, *Vucevic, Pavlicic - Ceko, Weber.
*Vucevic sent off, 79min.

SUNDAY, JULY 19

Jul 19 = Guatemala City — WC CONCACAF qual
Guatemala 0
Honduras 0
Att: 25,000.

Jul 19 = Managua — WC CONCACAF qual
Nicaragua 0
El Salvador 5 (Estrada 2, Jorge Gonzalez 16, 75, Castro Borja 20, Ulloa 70)
HT: 0-3. **Att:** 12,000.

OTHER MATCHES

Jul 2
(San Pedro Sula): **Honduras 1** (Suazo 56), **Gremio 1** (Caio 24).
(Barranquilla): **Colombia Oly 0, Poland Oly 0**
(Colombia win 4-3 on pens).
(Barranquilla): **Paraguay Oly 1, Mexico Oly 0.**
Jul 6
(Pinzolo): **Italy Oly 1** (Rocco 77), **Yomiuri 1** (Kitazawa 27).
Jul 8
(Tegucigalpa): **Honduras 1** (Benett 31pen), **Colombia Oly 0.**
Jul 13
(Canet, Fra): **US Oly 1** (Moore 87pen), **Qatar Oly 0.**
Jul 15
(Canet): **Rodez 2** (Lecompte 1, Bobek 74), **US Oly 5** (Allnutt 14, Brose 15, Washington 51, Moor 82pen, Jones 88).
Jul 17
(Font-Romeu): **Marseille 4** (Deschamps 9, Pele 18, Omam-Biyik 31, Boli 88), **US Oly 2** (Dayak 25, Lagos 81).
Jul 19
(Beziers): **Nice 1** (Buscher 23), **US Oly 0.**

EUROPEAN UNDER-21 CHAMPIONSHIP
Jun 3 = Vaxjo — Final, 2nd leg
Sweden 1 (Simpson 56)
Italy 0.
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 6,172.
Italy win 2-1 on agg
Sweden: Ekolm - Nilsson, Apelstav, Alexandersson, Lilius - Mild, Landbedrg (Axeldahl 77), Moberg, Gudmundsson (Paldan 53) - Rodlund, Simpson.
Italy: Antonioli - Bonomi, Matrecano, Favalli, Rossini - Taccola, Albertini, Corini, Marcolin (Sordo 89) - Melli (Muzzi 59), Buso.

South American Results

SOUTH AMERICAN CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP (Libertadores Cup)

May 28 — Semi-finals, 1st leg
In Sao Paulo, Brazil

SAO PAULO (Bra) 3 (Muller, Palhinha, Rinaldo)
BARCELONA (Ecu) 0
HT: 3-0.

● Sao Paulo virtually clinched their final place with a scintillating performance which brought them three first half goals and they eased up after the interval as at the time they were hard-pressed to qualify for the semifinal stage of their national championship. Barcelona gave a below par performance with several of their leading players — notably their Argentine star Ruben Insua — off form.

In Rosario, Argentina.
NEWELL'S OLD BOYS (Arg) 1 (Mendoza)
AMERICA (Col) 1 (De Avila)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Juan Escobar (Par).
Newell's OB: Scoponi, Saldana, Gamboa, Pochettino, Berizzo, Llop, Berti, Martino, Zamora, Domizzi (Lunari), Mendoza.
America: Nino, Perez, Balbis, Bermudez, Cabrera, Alvarez, Pimentel, Da Silva (Lozano), De Avila (Guerrero), Angulo, Rincon.

● America surprised the home team with some good moves and technique to take the lead after nine minutes. Newell's spent most of the rest of the game trying to equalize and getting more nervous as the minutes ticked by. They managed it only 13 minutes from the end.

June 3 — Semi-finals, 2nd legs
In Guayaquil, Ecuador.
BARCELONA (Ecu) 2 (Gavica, Gilson)
SAO PAULO (Bra) 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Ernesto Filippi (Uru).
Sao Paulo won 3-2 on agg.
Barcelona: Cevallos, F. Bravo, Monzon, Montanero, Alcivar (Benitez), Rosero (D. Bravo), Bernuncio, Insua, Gavica, Munoz, Gilson.
Sao Paulo: Zetti, Cafu, Antonio Carlos, Ronaldo, Adilson, Suelio, Pintado, Rai (Macedo), Palinha, Miller, Rinaldo (Sidney).

● Sao Paulo played their usual attacking game in spite of having a 3-0 first leg cushion to defend and they had as many chances as their rival, but nearly paid for it when Barcelona went 2-0 up with three minutes to go. The final moments proved to be dramatic with the Ecuadorians going all out for an aggregate equalizer to gain another chance in a penalty shoot-out.

In Cali, Colombia.
AMERICA (Col) 1 (J. Da Silva pen)
NEWELL'S OLD BOYS (Arg) 1 (Pochettino)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 45,000. **Ref:** Marcio Rezende (Bra).
Agg: 2-2. ***Newell's won 11-10 on pens.***
America: Nino, Cabrera (Maturana), Balbis, Bermudez, Perez, Pimentel, Alvarez, Rincon, De Avila (Escobar), J. Da Silva, Angulo.
Newell's OB: Scoponi, Saldana, Gamboa, Pochettino, Berrizo, Martino (Gottargonce), Llop, Berti, Zamora, Domizzi, Mendoza (Ragio).

● Newell's gained a four-minute goal and defended it desperately for the remainder of the game against America who were favourites in this tie after their first leg away draw, but they only managed to equalise with a last-minute penalty to stay in the hunt. Newell's won the exciting penalty shootout — one of the longest in the tournament's history — by 11-10.

June 10 — Final, 1st leg
In Rosario, Argentina.
NEWELL'S OLD BOYS (Arg) 1 (Berizzo pen)
SAO PAULO (Bra) 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Hernan Silva (Chi).
Newell's OB: Scoponi, Saldana, Gamboa, Pochettino, Raggio, Berrizo (Garfagnolli), Berti, Martino, Zamora, Lunari, Mendoza (Domizzi).
Sao Paulo: Zetti, Cafu, Antonio Carlos, Ronaldo, Ivan, Adilson, Pintado, Rai, Muller, Palinha (Macedo), Elivelton.

● There was little to choose between the teams in the first half when Newell's were well stopped by Sao Paulo's tactics and could only gain their lead with a penalty shortly before half-time which looked a bit like casual hands. Newell's had the better of the exchanges in the second half, but lacked penetration and were too individual to score.

June 17 — Final, 2nd leg
In Sao Paulo, Brazil.
SAO PAULO (Bra) 1 (Rai, pen.)
NEWELL'S OLD BOYS (Arg) 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 105,000. **Ref:** Jorge Torres (Col).
Agg: 1-1. ***Sao Paulo won 3-2 on pens.***
Sao Paulo: Zetti, Cafu, Antonio Carlos, Ronaldo, Ivan, Adilson, Pintado, Rai, Palhinha, Muller (Macedo), Elivelton.
Newell's OB: Scoponi, Pochettino, Gamboa, Llop, Saldana, Berizzo, Berti, Martino (Domizzi), Lunari, Zamora, Mendoza.

● Newell's, below form, seemed to regain their touch halfway through the second half when Sao Paulo were awarded a penalty which Rai converted, leaving the aggregate score level. Sao Paulo were the more solid team and deserved to win the penalty shootout when Zetti saved the ninth shot. Earlier Scoponi had also made a save, but Berizzo and Mendoza hit the post and shot over the crossbar respectively for Newell's.

CONCACAF CHAMPION CLUBS CUP
June 11 — Third round, 1st leg
In San Francisco, USA.
SAN FRANCISCO BAY BLACKHAWKS (US) 3 (Masters, Doyle, Leonetti)
REAL ESPANA (Hon) 0
HT: 1-0.

SOUTH AMERICAN MASTERS TOURNAMENT
(for Super Cup winners)
played in Buenos Aires, Argentina
(at Velez Sarsfield stadium).

May 27 (1st round)
BOCA JUNIORS (Arg) 1 (Cabanas)
OLIMPIA (Par) 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Ernesto Filippi (Uru).
Boca Juniors: Navarro Montoya, Sonora, Simon, Giuntini, Abramovich, Pico, Giunta, Apud, Marcico, Saturno (Amato), Cabanas.
Olimpia: Tavarelli, Caceres, Ramirez, Ayala, Jara, Romero, Vidal Sanabria, Campos (Bourdier), Miguel Sanabria, Amarilla, Caballero (Guirland).

● Boca Juniors went ahead in the first move after only 30 seconds and were superior for the first 15 minutes, but then play evened up and became poor. It improved in the second half when both teams worked out chances, but Olimpia to had to play the last 23 minutes with 10 men, Ramirez being sent off.

May 29 (1st round)
RACING CLUB (Arg) 1 (R.Paz)
CRUZEIRO (Bra) 1 (Charles)
Cruzeiro won 3-1 on pens.
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 6,000. **Ref:** Enrique Marin (Chi).
Racing: Roa, Reinoso, Boreli, Vallejos, Destefano, Guendulain, Fabbri, Paz, Basualdo, Carranza (Nunez), Torres.
Cruzeiro: Ze Carlos, Nonato, Paulo Roberto, Paulau, Celio Lucio, Bojadeiro, Ademir, Cleison, Macale (Luis Fernando), Charles, Andrade (Edson).

● Most of the play was in midfield where Cruzeiro showed better ball play in a poor match. In the penalty shootout, Cruzeiro goalkeeper Ze Carlos stopped two shots while his opposite number stopped one. Racing only converted one of four shots.

May 31 (Final)
BOCA JUNIORS (Arg) 2 (Sonora, Giuntini)
CRUZEIRO (Bra) 1 (Edson)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 18,000.

● Boca Juniors won this match and tournament deservedly as they tried harder for a win. Boca were ineffective in attack, but Cruzeiro rarely tried to go forward in a poor match.

3rd play play-off
OLIMPIA (Par) 2 (Campos 2)
RACING CLUB (Arg) 1 (Boreli, pen)
HT: 1-1.
Olimpia: Tavarelli, Jara, Caceres, Vergara, V. Sanabria, Romero (Boudier), Ayala, Mesa (Guirland), M. Sanabria, Amarilla, Campos.
Racing: Bartero, Reinoso, Boreli, Fabbri, Distefano (Fleitas), Guendulain, Vallejos, Paz, Basualdo, Carranza (Bustos), Torres.

● Racing showed better ball-play, specially in the first half and came close several times, Paz hitting the post twice with three kicks. Olimpia relied more on counter-attacks to come from behind.

MAJOR CLUB INTERNATIONALS

May 28: Universitario (Peru) 3 Independiente (Arg) 1
June 10: Union Espanola (Chi) 2 Sevilla (Spa) 4.

SOUTH & CENTRAL AMERICAN LEAGUE TABLES

ARGENTINA
National A Division

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Velez	16	9	6	1	26	13	24
Newell's OB	15	9	5	1	21	7	23
Boca Juniors	16	9	5	2	18	10	23
Dep. Espanol	16	7	8	1	21	10	22
Platense	16	8	4	4	22	11	20
River Plate	16	6	8	2	24	20	20
Racing Club	16	4	9	3	11	9	17
Gimnasia	16	5	6	5	20	17	16
Independiente	16	4	7	5	15	14	15
Belgrano	16	5	5	6	16	16	15
Rosario Central	16	7	1	8	16	20	15
FC Oeste	15	4	6	5	12	12	14
Huracan	16	3	8	5	14	17	14
Talleres	15	3	7	5	11	14	13
Union Santa Fe	16	2	9	5	9	11	13
Argentinos Jun.	16	3	5	8	14	19	11
Estudiantes	16	2	8	6	14	22	11
Dep. Mandiyu	16	2	7	7	10	24	11
San Lorenzo	16	3	4	9	11	22	10
Quilmes	15	3	2	10	10	26	8

Relegation averages *(average points over last three seasons — two relegated):* Argentinos Juniors 0,936; Estudiantes de La Plata 0,909; Dep. Espanol 0,891; Talleres Cordoba 0,890; Union Santa Fe 0,855; Quilmes — already relegated — 0,529.

COLOMBIA
Opening tournament *(final standings)*
Group A: 1) Deportivo Cali 25pts; 2) Nacional (on goal difference) 18; 3) Envigado 18; 4) Millonarios 17; 5) At. Junior 16; 6) Cucuta, Pereira 12; 8) Tolima 10.
Group B: 1) Independiente Santa Fe (on goal diff.) 19; 2) Union Magdalena (on goal diff.) 19; 3) Bucaramanga 19; 4) Caldas 17; 5) America 16; 6) Independiente Medellin, Quindio 14; 8) Real Cartagena 10. (Caldas also known as Once Philips)

● Top team in each section and two second-placed teams play off for bonus points to count in final round.

URUGUAY
First Division

Pts	P	W	D	L	F	A	
Nacional	9	7	2	0	21	9	16
Danubio	9	5	3	1	14	5	13
Racing Club	10	3	6	1	8	6	12
River Plate	9	4	2	3	14	10	10
Penarol	9	4	2	3	10	6	10
Liverpool	9	3	4	2	7	11	10
Bella Vista	10	4	1	5	10	11	9
Rentistas	9	4	0	5	9	15	8
Wanderers	9	3	2	4	7	8	8
Progreso	10	2	3	5	12	20	7
Defensor	9	1	4	4	4	7	6
Central Espanol	9	2	2	5	6	10	6
Cerro	9	1	3	5	9	12	5

CHILE
First Division *(After 3 games):* 1) Antofagasta 6pts; 2) Union Espanola 5; 3) Fernandez Vial, Colo Colo, Concepcion 4; 6) Palestino, Huachipato 3; 8) La Serena, Temuco, Universidad de Chile (one game less), Cobreloa (One less) 2; 12) Universidad Catolica (two less), O'Higgins, Everton 1; 15) Cobresal, (two less), Coquimbo (one less) 0.

PERU
First Division

Pts	P	W	D	L	F	A	
Univ. de Deportes	10	7	1	2	15	6	15
Cienciano	10	6	2	2	16	12	14
Sporting Cristal	10	4	4	2	13	9	12
U.T. Cajamarca	10	5	2	3	12	10	12
Leon Huanuco	10	3	5	2	14	8	11
San Agustin	10	3	5	2	9	8	11
C. Iquitos	10	4	3	3	9	10	11
Alianza	10	5	1	4	14	15	11
Alianza Lima	10	3	4	3	6	5	10
Dep. Municipal	10	2	5	3	14	14	9
Sport Boys	10	2	5	3	12	12	9
Carlos Mannucci	10	2	4	4	5	7	8
Melgar	10	2	4	4	9	13	8
Defensor Lima	10	2	3	5	11	16	7
Hijos	10	1	4	5	11	16	6
Union Minas	10	2	2	6	12	21	6

ECUADOR
First Division
1) Emelec 22pts; 2) Barcelona, Liga Deportiva Universitaria 20; 4) Cuenca 19; 5) Nacional 17; 6) Aucas, Dep. Quito 14; 8) Valdez 11; 9) Universidad Catolica, Delfin, Green Cross 10; 12) Tecnico Universitario 9.

PARAGUAY
First Division *(After 4 games):* 1) Sportivo Luqueno 7pts; 2) Olimpia 6; 3) Atletico Colegiales 5; 4) San Lorenzo, Presidente Hayes, Cerro Cora, Libertad 4; 8) Sol de America, River Plate, Cerro Porteno, Guarani 3; 12) Nacional 2.

BRAZIL
National Championship
(1st round — final standings)
1) Vasco da Gama 26pts; 2) Botafogo, Bragantino 24; 4) Flamengo 22; 5) Cruzeiro, Santos, Corinthians, Sao Paulo 21; 9) Internacional P.A., Guarani 20; 11) Sport, Oakneuras 19; 13) Fluminense, Atletico Mineiro 18; 15) Atletico Paranaense 16; 16) Portuguesa, Goias 15; 18) Bahia 14; 19) Nautico 13; 20) Paysandu 12.

BOLIVIA
National Championship
1) Bolivar 21pts; 2) The Strongest 20; 3) San Jose 19; 4) Ciclon 17; 5) Blooming, Litoral 15; 7) Jorge Wilsterman, Independiente 14; 9) Universitario 13; 10) Destroyers, Oriente Petrolero 12; 12) Orcobol, Petrolero 11; 14) Real Beni 10; 15) Real Santa Cruz, Chaco 4.

VENEZUELA
First Division *(final standings)*
1) Caracas FC 43pts; 2) Minerven 42; 3) Maritimo 39; 4) Tachira 38; 5) Trujillanos 37; 6) Univ. de los Andes 36; 7) Mineros de Guyana 34; 8) Anzoategui 31; 9) Monagas 30; 10) Lara, Zamora 27; 12) Portuguesa 26; 13) Deportivo Italia 22; 14) Estudiantes 21; 15) Industriales 17; 16) Salineros 10.

COSTA RICA
Final round
1) Alajuelense 11pts; 2) Saprissa 10; 3) Puntarenas, El Carmen, Turrialba 7; 6) Zeledon 6.

EL SALVADOR
Final round *(After 3 of 6 games):* 1) Alianza 4pts; 2) Luis A. Firpo, Aguila 3; 4) FAS 2.

Wilkinson (left) with his chairman at Leeds, Leslie Silver.

Which way for Wilkinson?

A realistic look at the Premier problems

HOWARD WILKINSON admits: "If I had any sense I should have left Leeds in May after we won the League Championship."

HOWARD WILKINSON knows full well that when you are on top, the only way to go is down, and he is well aware of the pitfalls awaiting his club as they aim to become the first to win the new Premier League title and go for the Champions' Cup as well.

Leeds made a lot friends when winning the First Division title last season, breaking the Merseyside-London grip of the past decade. But much as Wilkinson would like to be No, 1 in the new Premier, he points out that only seven times in nearly 50 years, since World War Two, has the championship been retained, and Liverpool did it four times.

"If we finish on top again, the records will merely show that we retained our place," he says. "From that point of view, it's downhill unless we win in Europe.

"If you could guarantee to put me to sleep now and wake me up next May with the European Cup by my side, I'd settle for that."

Wilkinson , now 48, has no desire to leave Leeds. "I was born in Yorkshire, I like Yorkshire, and I don't want to live anywhere else," he says.

"And it's a wonderful feeling, knowing that you're going to be flying the flag for England in Europe. We aim to make people proud of us.

"We don't go in for biting our nails and complaining of pressure. We go about things in a quiet, professional manner, and that's what we'll continue to do.

Missed

"There's a suggestion that the motivation isn't as great in the season immediately after winning a trophy. I have to nurture motivation in those who retain it, re-create it in those who need it, and get rid of those who might be beyond motivating."

Which brings us to the players in the squad, and two in particular.

One, 35-year-old skipper Gordon Strachan, missed Scotland's European Championship campaign in order to rest his troublesome back, and faces a rival for his club place in Scott Sellars, who has rejoined his old club from Blackburn. The other, striker Lee Chapman, is now 32, and perhaps vulnerable to the challenge from Eric Cantona and others.

Wilkinson says of Strachan: "He's already outlived the football equivalent of three score years and ten. He's got to finish some time, but if he is injury-free this season anyone else will have a hell of a job forcing him out.

"He's not only a very good player, he's as good a competitor as anyone I've known. He's an influential person. We share the same views on football and on life. He lightens my load."

And of Chapman, Wilkinson says: "He's fitter than ever. I remember when we were together with Sheffield Wednesday, I used to talk to him about diet and fitness. He started reading up those subjects, and gradually I noticed a difference in his eating habits. He was doing private work in the gym, too.

"That was about eight years ago, and now we're seeing the benefits."

Wilkinson was elected chairman of the League Managers Association last year, and has decided views on football's future. "Our game is the goose that laid the golden egg," he says. "It gets all sorts of serious illnesses, and all we do is give it a pill or an injection and put it back on the nest to lay more golden eggs. But sooner or later that goose will lose its feathers and die.

"We keep hearing that the game needs changing, but apparently the only way you can influence anything is by winning. Nobody listens to us, the managers.

"We still have 22 clubs in the top division. That's too many. But the number of games is not the problem- it's the number of pressure games.

"I"d like to be able to play a couple of friendlies before we meet Stuttgart in the European Cup, for example. Games where the result did not matter but where the players could work on things we do in training. It's just not possible.

"I'd like to give more time to the kids, but with our schedule I can't. If you gave me 1,000 kids at the age of nine, kids who liked football and had fairly good ball control and could dribble, I'd give you footballers at 17.

"We're not in the 1920s and 30s, when there was an environment for raising players- kids playing under street lamps. We have to produce the environment of the 30s but live the life of the 90s. That's the challenge for the parent, teacher or coach.

"But who is going to coach the coach? Who is going to pick me up if I make an error?

"I don't believe there is an abundance of talent in this country. Football scouts outnumber the talent they have available to spot. And if you can produce one first-team player per season from your youngsters then you're doing well."

The pragmatic Wilkinson had been a player, with Sheffield Wednesday and Brighton between 1964 and 1970, and although he never reached star status he always felt that football was right for his future.

"I could have chosen something else, possibly in surgery or music. I might have been interested in politics, too, but I need to spend time outdoors."

He is now well aware of the wider implications of soccer management. "This job should be part science, part art, part institution," he claims. "Being manager here means that you're largely responsible for a business with a turnover of £12 million a year. You can't have any Tom, Dick or Harry in charge of something that big.

Prepared

"Any company with our sort of income and expenditure has to have someone who is prepared to accept that responsibility and take it seriously. Football is a game — running it isn't."

Wilkinson's managerial expertise has made him known outside soccer, and he has lectured at conferences attended by industrialists and medical men.

"They are pleasant diversions, and if the people listening feel that my lectures are of some benefit, then I'm very pleased," he says.

"Football managers aren't taken seriously enough outside the game, and that's why I'm keen for the LMA to do well. As chairman I want the members to gain respect.

The last words from the man who seems certain to have a big bearing on the success, or otherwise, of the Premier League: "A football club is like a swan — moving serenely on the surface but with a tremendous amount of work going on underneath. That work must never stop.

"Of course, achievement brings its own benefits, but you can't sit back. That's a short cut to failure. You"re only as good as your last result. A cliche, of course- but it's true."

BERNARD **BALE** and DERICK **ALLSOP**

The Silver seal

LESLIE SILVER, chairman of Leeds, is perhaps Howard Wilkinson's greatest fan.

"Just before Howard took the job he came to my offices," says Silver. "We sat down, opened a bottle, and talked.

"I was amazed. It was the first time in football that I had come across somebody who approached the game with the professionalism I found in business,

"Howard's attention to detail is remarkable. He's as good a manager as any I've met in any field. Football is his business, but he would have been just the same in any other role. He would have been a top exectuive.

"Bringing him to Elland Road was one of the top two or three moves I"ve ever made."

Home News

Ards seem set to climb

ARDS, who have not created too much of a stir on the Ulster scene since their last Irish Cup victory back in 1974, are determined to recapture lost glories.

The club, under manager Paul Malone, are investing heavily in new players and have raised a few eyebrows with their acquisitions.

Ards are determined to get it right this time. In October 1990 they had signed former Linfield manager Roy Coyle, who looked well on the way to building up a strong squad. Then, in the summer of 1991, he left to take over League of Ireland side Derry City.

Malone, formerly in charge at Larne, took over last summer. Ards finished seventh in the League and were knocked out in the quarter-finals of the Cup by eventual winners Glenavon.

Now, having invested in an impressive £100,000 grandstand 18 months ago, the facilities are among the best of any provincial club . . . and it's the team's turn to be strengthened.

ROY **KITSON**

Cash causes five-club split

NO SOONER had the dust settled on the Scottish national team's highly creditable performance during the European Championship finals in Sweden than the domestic game was hit by one of the most revolutionary proposals in history.

After months of clandestine meetings, leaked rumours and counter-rumours, five of the country's most prominent clubs — Rangers, Celtic, Hearts, Aberdeen and Dundee United — gave two years' notice of their intention to resign from the Scottish League and to inaugurate a breakaway Scottish Super League.

The 17-point plan on which the proposal has been based, incorporated within a 100-page feasibility study carried out by management consultants, features a variety of innovations.

These include strict membership criteria (based on attainment of certain standards in respect of stadium quality, financial stability etc.), a January break, a revised points system (three points for an away win), transfer restrictions and an increased half-time interval of 15 minutes, the final point being regarded by cynics as a blatant effort to increase catering revenue.

Levelled

The proposal was greeted with a potent cocktail of praise, hostility and bewilderment from all areas of the Scottish game.

Some say the "big five" are taking the initiative towards reforming Scottish football within a modern commercial environment; others have levelled accusations of greed and self-interest towards the breakaway group.

The majority appear content to adopt a "wait and see" attitude, especially as the proposal fails to address in any detail certain administrative and legal hurdles to be negotiated before the plan becomes reality.

Former Scottish League official Jack Steedman was especially critical of the concept, inferring that some individuals saw their involvement in football as little more than a commercial opportunity, akin to selling tins of beans from a supermarket shelf.

Steedman suggested that those individuals understood little, and cared less, about the emotional attatchments which are evident throughout the game, perhaps more vehemently apparent among smaller clubs.

Appointed

Regardless of the Super League proposals, life will go on as usual in Scottish football for another season at least.

Aberdeen have appointed former Scotland captain Roy Aitken as player-coach.

Aitken, who played for relegated St Mirren last season after spells with both Celtic and Newcastle United, teams up at Pittodrie with his old on-field adversary Willie Miller, now manager of the Dons.

Goalkeeper Andy Rhodes (left) has moved from relegated Dunfermline to St Johnstone in a deal reportedly worth £300,000, including two players.

ALAN **FAIRLEY**

New League under way

PUBLICATION of the season's fixture list finally heralds the start of the new League of Wales.

Twelve months of controversy ended with one final hiccup, when Abergavenny Thursdays were ejected for not fulfilling the League's financial requirements. Their place was offered to Bridgend Town, who declined, and Thursdays struck a late cash deal and were re-admitted.

Rhyl, former exiles in the HFS League, were denied a late entry into the new set-up, and have to make do with the Cymru Alliance.

The fixture list throws up some interesting early ties, with secretary John Deakin having structured the format so that most North v South fixtures take place in the first and last weeks of the season, to enable clubs to travel during the best weather.

The top five referees in Wales — Howard King, Roger Gifford, Keith Cooper, Keith Burge and John Lloyd — are on English FA Premier and Football League lists, but will officiate in the new League when possible.

Appealed

The controversy concerning the remaining rebels continues to surface at intervals. Caernarfon Town, now based in Manchester, have appealed to UEFA for assistance. They have been forced to play in England in order to play in the English system, but the appeal seems pointless, because UEFA initially forced the FAW to "show control" over those clubs playing in England.

This instruction meant that the rebels had to seek membership of the English FA via an accepting County FA.

UEFA are unlikely to turn about and back Caernarfon's bid to play at home and not in their planned ground-sharing scheme with Curzon Ashton.

To further complicate matters the FAW have allowed Morda United, previously members of the Mid-Wales League, to enter the Cymru Alliance, despite being based 5 miles inside England.

National team manager Terry Yorath has signed a new 18-month contract, with a bonus on qualification for the 1994 World Cup Finals. But he admits to being unhappy with the deal — he wanted a four-year contract to see him into the 1996 European Championship.

MEL **AP IOR THOMAS**

Much the same despite the name

THE NAME has changed but there is an all too familiar look about the English Championship as the new season beckons.

After all the arguments, the accusations and the counter accusations, the Premier League becomes reality with the first round of matches on August 15.

This was always going to be an important campaign for the backers of the breakaway movement. Now, in the wake of England's miserable performance in the European Championship, it takes on still greater significance and responsibility.

The nation is in desperate need of a lift, of a fresh start. People want a smile on the face of the game, instead of the glum expression which represented the ill-fated trip to Sweden.

But can we anticipate a lift, a fresh start from the super league? A glance at the opening weekend's fixture list scarcely inspires optimism. The computer managed to pair champions Leeds United with Wimbledon!

BSkyB Television, armed with their new Premier League contract, felt they had to start their live production on August 16 with coverage of the champions, but the police pointed out that a Michael Jackson concert and a cycling event were scheduled in Leeds for that day.

So the pop star and the pedallers forced the men with the £304m deal to switch to Nottingham Forest v Liverpool.

Premier League football is launched with the same 22-club format that hinders the English game's development on the international stage. The competition will doubtless be fast and fierce — and will yet again, take a heavy toll on players.

The show — and let's hope some clubs remember that is what it is supposed to be — requires poise as well as pace, imagination as well as muscle.

Players with such quality are, alas, in short supply. Paul Gascoigne, absent through injury last season, has gone, so has Gary Lineker. Injury clouds the future for John Barnes, and we must wonder how much more Bryan Robson and Gordon Strachan have to give.

The faith of the paying public, who have turned up at English club grounds in increasing numbers over recent seasons, is about to be tested.

Which teams will test the defending champions? Leeds, admirable though they were in taking the title, did so only because, on the home straight, Manchester United inexplicably stumbled.

But the Uniteds from Leeds and Manchester will be prominent again, as will Arsenal and Liverpool. Most of the others will struggle to keep up with the pace, though Sheffield Wednesday could be a good outside bet.

The situation looks interesting . . . but not Super.

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